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Some Theological Reflections on Chalcedon

SERGE S. VERKHOVSKY

There may be various approaches to the Chalcedonian oros. Firstly it has a great religious significance, but it also has a great value for a scientific theology. Truth, revealed in dogmas, determines the whole life of the Church. Theology is called to give a more accurately rational definition of truth, to lay it out systematically and explain its contents. In this manner Theology satisfies a just desire for knowledge of Christians and forges weapons against heresies which can only be surmounted by precise and deepened knowledge of truth.

The most essential part of the Chalcedonian definition is expressed by the Council in the following words:

"Therefore, following the holy fathers, we all with one accord teach men to acknowledge one and the same Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, at once complete in Godhead and complete in manhood, truly God and truly man, consisting also of a reasonable soul and body; of one substance (*homousios*) with the Father as regards his Godhead, and at the same time of one substance with us as regards his manhood; like us in all respects, apart from sin; as regards his Godhead, begotten of the Father before the ages, but yet as regards his manhood begotten, for us men and for our salvation, of Mary the Virgin, the God-bearer (*Theotokos*); one and the same Christ, Son, Lord, Only-begotten, recognized in two natures, without confusion, without change, without division, without separation."

The Chalcedonian dogma solemnly confirms that Christ is the Son of God, true God who truly became man. One and the same Christ, our Lord and Savior, is indeed God and Man. The religious significance of this doctrine is immense, inasmuch as all our faith in salvation rests on the conviction that Christ is both God and Man. Salvation is likewise impossible if Christ is only God or only Man.¹

Let us imagine that Christ was only man. Can a man, even if he is without sin, save all mankind, i.e. to assume in his being, all men; to surmount and to ransom all their faults and sins, to transform them in himself, to become an ideal image of man, perfect love, truth and holiness, to unite all with God and with each other? Obviously it is beyond the capabilities of any man, especially one weakened by sin as all men are. Only God, born as man among fallen mankind, could communicate to his human nature the all-embracing power of salvation.

On the other hand, if salvation is essentially a complete cleansing and transfiguration of man and the transformation of fallen mankind into a new creation, then salvation could only be possible through man himself, from within his nature. Someone, originating from Old Adam, must have become

a New Adam, the source of the renewed mankind. Thus the Savior, being God, must also have been a man.

However, the union in Christ of the Divine and human, which is evident from the New Testament and substantiated by the Chalcedonian Council, could not but call forth many questions. In the first place, is such a miraculous union possible? Doesn't it appear imaginary? Shouldn't it be substantially limited in its meaning? In the second place, if it is true, then how is it possible? How can it be explained and on what basis can it be established? The possibility of the union of God and man in Christ was rejected or limited by a whole series of heresies, just as it is denied today by unbelievers and "semi-believers". The Patristic theology successfully defended the faith in the God-manhood of Christ. First of all the Church could not but see a historical event in the Incarnation. The witness of Christ himself and of the Apostolic Church, preserved in Scripture and Tradition, could be reinterpreted (and misunderstood), but its meaning is clear for the unbiased mind: The Word became flesh (Jn. 1:14), The Son of God was born of a woman (Gal. IV:4), from the seed of David (Rom. I:3) and became Emmanuel (Mt. I:23). Our Lord obtained the Church with his own blood (Acts XX:28), Crucified was the Lord of Glory (I Cor. II:8), the Author of Life (Acts III:15); He who descended from heaven, the Son of Man (Jn. III:13).

For the holy martyr, Ignatius Theophoros, the pupil of the Apostles:

"Our Lord, Jesus Christ is God in flesh, true Life in death, from Mary and from God, the Son of man and the Son of God." (Ad Polyc., 3).

It is indeed noteworthy that the early church experienced the fact of our salvation with such strength that this very fact served as an obvious proof of the truth of the Incarnation. For if salvation of men has been and is being fulfilled and yet is impossible without our Savior having been truly God and truly man, then Christ is God-man. This is the foundation of the well-known "soteriological argument" which the Fathers directed against Gnostics, Arians, Apollinarians, Nestorians and other heretics. The Incarnation is not in contradiction with Divine dignity and does not violate the distinction between the Divine and human. Having created the world, God in his creative and providential power and wisdom is present in the world and in each creature. The Divine Logos, through whom God the Father created everything, and who is inseparable from the creation, did not pollute Himself by personally assuming that sinless nature which he himself created.² If God is love, then it is natural for the Son of God to have come on earth to save the lost and perishing man. Incarnation is not disgraceful for God, and even the death on the cross glorifies the unlimited and life-giving love of God, for the sake of which, Christ offers the Sacrifice of Redemption.³ Creation is not a stranger to God: it is conformed to God, and from the beginning, in paradise, man was called to

perfect communion with God. In Christ, in the hypostatic union of God with man, this communion is fulfilled.

At the same time the divine and human natures in Christ do not mix and one does not become the other. Moreover the inter-penetration, and as if adhesion of the divine and human in Christ has its measure inasmuch as even the most perfect human nature, being created, is essentially limited and cannot be equal to the divine nature. Thus the idea of the Incarnation does not lead us to that absurd and religiously intolerable conclusion that the absolute divine Spirit is identified or is somehow equalized with the limited, created nature of man.

To the question, how is it possible for Christ to be born God and man, Orthodox theology answers first that it is possible for God to be in the most intimate relation with the creation, and secondly and mainly with the doctrine of the unity of person in Christ notwithstanding his two natures.

The first point was partially discussed above. God, factually, is united with creation. In Christ his oneness reaches its fulness. There is nothing unbecoming or contradictory to God in this union. It must be added that Scripture and Orthodox Tradition always maintained this point of view, that God is not a prisoner of his own transcending perfection and absoluteness: He can, remaining absolute in Himself, condescend to creation in his creative ideas and energies, in His Word, theophanies, revelations and grace.⁴ The Incarnation is the most perfect of the condescension of God to creation: the wisdom of God in the words of St. Paul became "... our wisdom ..." (I Cor. I:30) "For Him the whole fulness of deity dwells bodily" (Col. II:9). The Word of God was revealed in the word of man, he who was the image of God was revealed in the image of Man. But let us rather consider the doctrine of the oneness of Christ's hypostasis. There is in Christ one hypostasis or Person and two natures or essences. We must consequently distinguish Person from essence and allow the possibility of a union of two different natures in one Person. Space does not allow us to dwell too long on the concept of essence in Patristics. Under the influence of Greek philosophy, we find two meanings of 'substance' in the Fathers: one reflects the Aristotelian 'prima substantia' meaning a being taken in its complete, independent existence. The second implies the essential content and the totality of the necessary properties of any given being. Thus one can call every man a being because he possesses the human nature or essence common to all men. It would be more accurate to call 'being' the whole mankind in its polypersonal unity. Indeed, in connection with the Trinitarian discussions of the IVth century there arose in Patristic thought the idea of one, yet polyhypostatic consubstantial being. Thus God is one trihypostatic being, having one essence. The Fathers applied the idea of consubstantiality to mankind also. The Chalcedonian oros mentions Christ as consubstantial with mankind

Let us now consider the concept of Person. Greek philosophy was interested in the general rather than the particular or the individual. For it, the general in the being rather than the individual seemed the more perfect, valuable and permanent. Typical in this respect is Anaximander, for whom the desire for a personal existence is a sort of sin. Greek philosophy knew of course the fact of individual existence, but it either explained it by the stability of concrete substances capable of activity or formally defined the individual as a subject with a particular characteristic (Stoics). It is noteworthy that the 'principium individuationis' for the Greek philosophy laid traditionally in the matter, i.e. from the point of view of the Greek philosophers themselves, in the lowest if not negative entity.

The Fathers of the Church obviously could not depend on Greek philosophy in their teaching about Person. Terminologically the word 'persona' first appeared in the sense of Person in the West (from the 3rd century) and then in the East (from the 4th century as 'prosopon'). The word 'hypostasis' at first had a broad meaning of a concrete reality. From the middle of the 4th century it began to be used in the sense of 'Person' primarily in Triadology. After Chalcedon it began to be used in the same sense in Christology and generally in theology.

In Patristics, the most popular doctrines about Person are those of Leontius of Byzantium and John Damascene. The first had a valuable doctrine of 'en-hypostasis' (of which more is stated below), but the whole perspective of Leontius is borrowed, to his own misfortune, from Greek philosophy.⁸ More or less the same can be said about John Damascene. Many excellent ideas can be found in his works but he does not have a complete system of 'Person'.⁹ Other Fathers have separate definitions and characteristics. Here is how one can briefly summarize the Patristic doctrine of Person.

Person or hypostasis is the particular mode of existence of each being.¹⁰ It is in no case a part of being, which would be separated from everything else in the being.¹¹ It is a particular principle of existence which embraces the whole being, it pervades everything with itself, making everything personal or actual, or in other words, belonging to this person. In this respect hypostasis is the principle corresponding to the essence, which also is not part of being but the mode of its existence.¹² Hypostasis is the principle of existence and life.¹³ This means that the non-hypostatical cannot exist; it can be thought of only as an abstract possibility. In reality the non-personal does not exist: everything belongs to some Person. Hypostasis is the carrier of existence, it is the subject of life—the one who lives.¹⁴

This does not mean that existence or life comes from Person or is created by it *ex nihilo*, but according to the deepest thought of Christian Theology each being, each individual, must have as the focal point, the carrier of its own

existence, the one who possesses and controls its own being. The Person is precisely the principle and the center of everything in the being. By its very morphosis the word 'hypostasis' implies that which underlies a thing, that by which anything subsists or exists.¹⁵ It is like a base of support of the whole being and all its contents. A hypostasis can proceed from another hypostasis (and only from it and not from something impersonal) but once it has come into being it is a 'self-existing' 'self-supporting' being.¹⁶ Thus Christ says that he has "life in himself" even if he has it from the Father (Jn. V:26). Thus hypostasis, in its logical aspect, is also the subject of whatever can be said about any given being.¹⁷ John Damascene writes that strictly speaking there is only the hypostasis. As to essence, it has its being in the hypostasis so that the real subject of existence is the hypostasis.¹⁸ Hence the conviction of the Fathers that if an essence has no hypostasis of its own it has to be 'enhypostasized', i.e. it belongs to some other hypostasis. Thus the human body is hypostasized by the spiritual person of man, thus the human nature in Christ is hypostasized by the person of the Son of God.¹⁹

The essence is possessed by the hypostasis. The latter is the carrier of all the accidents and the principle of the whole activity of the being.²⁰ It is the principle of freedom, movement, action.²¹ It is the principle of intelligence and thought.²² In the person, the principle of life, the active and passive aspects, must be distinguished. The Person actualizes and determines the concrete content of life and also the given state of the being. To live and to be active this way or another way, to be in that or another condition depends—according to the possibilities given by nature—only on the Person. At the same time the Person is the focal point of all the experiences of any given being: only the Person experiences, apprehends, accepts, perceives and feels.

If hypostasis is the foundation of existence and life, the carrier of all attributes of the being and of the very essence, then it is understandable that Orthodox Theology both in Triadology and Christology, as even the Roman Catholic scholars like to point out,²³ always stresses primarily the Persons of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in which it apprehends, in a living and concrete way, all their divine perfections and in Christ his human attributes.

Hypostasis is the principle of inner unity of each being. It is the principle of identity. Long before Chalcedon, the Fathers constantly underlined that being God and Man, Christ is 'one and the same'. Chalcedon defined that, that which makes Christ one and the same in two natures is his hypostasis. The hypostasis is indivisible in itself, a concrete indivisibility.²⁴ It conveys unity to everything in the being it hypostasizes, for everything in its being belongs to it. The essence is one because it is hypostatic. In general hypostasis is the principle of wholeness, the whole in itself. In it are united, as in a focal center, all the accidents and actions of the being. Therefore the Person is the principle of

the so-called 'communicatio idiomatum', i.e. the possibility for two natures included in one hypostasis to share mutually their properties.²⁶ Thus in man, the body can become spiritualized, and the soul can suffer the tribulation of the body as its own. Thus in Christ, man assumes the powers and perfections of God, and God lives in conformity with the man. The 'communion of natures' is possible without their hypostatical unity, but in such unity it becomes full, natural and necessary.

If hypostasis is the focal point of all the forms of experience of the being, it cannot but acquire a certain plurality. This led the Fathers to the idea of composed hypostasis.²⁷ In the heretical interpretation of this idea, the hypostasis was nothing else but a sum of two natures, a sum of their addition. But since the existence of an ahypostatical nature is ontologically impossible, Nestorius came to the conclusion that Christ possesses a composed hypostasis or 'prosopon tes henoseos', which is the sum of the hypostases of the divine and human nature of Christ in some common subject composed of his divine and human attributes. The 'prosopon tes henoseos' is only an addition of heteronomous elements but not the one self-identical center of Christ's being.²⁸ This doctrine was condemned by the Church. A mere union of two persons cannot result in one Person but only in a relationship of both. Besides, the identity of two persons is as ontologically impossible as an impersonal essence. Theodore of Mopsuestia was more logical than Nestorius when he suggested the analogy of a marriage to the union of God and man in Christ.²⁹ But such a union cannot be called a hypostatic union for the husband and wife are not one person.

Consequently the composed hypostasis of which the Fathers speak can only be understood as a participation of one Person with the existence of other natures hypostasized by it. Hypostasis is not nearly so much complex in itself as complex and pluralistic may be its existence. Thus Christ's hypostasis lives both a divine and a human life in all their complexity, thus becoming complex itself.

Two persons cannot be identified as one³⁰ because the Person is particular, exclusive, unrepeatable, unique and indivisible.³¹ As a self-identity, the Person cannot become another Person or two Persons, just as a mathematical point cannot be divided in two. However in a Person as such there is no limitation: it is neither a thing, a substance nor part of a substance, nor a faculty. It is only the first principle and the foundation of existence, and as such is open to all that exists.³² Therefore each Person can partake of the life of all, it can be in other hypostases (just as the Son of God abides in the Father and the Father in the Son). It can live the life of another (as Christ lived and continues to live in our life). But the Person always remains itself and does not mix with others. Hypostasis is 'self' (auto), self-existing, self-being, etc.³³ The same thought was expressed by the Fathers, who said that Persons were numerically

distinct: they can be counted as units.³⁴ St. Basil the Great very wisely pointed out that it is better not to count, but to name hypostases, for units are similarly impersonal but in names the unique distinction of each person is expressed. As the principle of an independent existence, the Person is the bearer of independence and freedom: if it does not create its own life, it can, in any case, determine it. As the particular and the exclusive hypostasis is radically distinct from essence which is primarily the common and the objective. If hypostasis can unite everything in itself, it does it only "for itself", subjectively. Objectively or ontologically, it unites with others through its nature.

Each hypostasis is determined by its special, personal, characteristics.⁵³ Triadology reveals that the personal character of a hypostasis is determined by its relation to the other hypostasis, by its special place or function, in the common existence. And this is rooted in the procession of one hypostasis from another. Obviously in the personal relations the individual characteristic of each Person is expressed. All other personal characteristics are either external or more or less accidental or common to many persons. Yet it is supremely important to distinguish the hypostasis as such from its attributes, even from its personal characteristics. The hypostasis possesses attributes and is determined by them in life. It finds its expression in them but is not identified with them, for it is their carrier and the principle of their existence.³⁶ Identification of the Person with its attributes results either in the reduction of the person to a particular act of its life (e.g. conscience, free will) or by individual character, or the identification of the person with its relation to another Person. Thus, for example, Scholastic Theology identifies the hypostasis of God the Father with fatherhood, the hypostasis of the Son of God with sonship, etc. Obviously the relationship cannot be the principle or the origin of existence. It itself implies a foundation of the one who is in relation with the other. Relationship is activity or state but not the hypostasis. The opinion of many philosophers and psychologists that the Person is self-consciousness or freedom or a special individual character is superficial, false and incompatible with the Patristic idea that will and reason are related to the nature and not to the Person, and that Person is not an expression but the foundation of individual existence.

Logically it is better to define each given Person by its particular function in relation to others, by names or personal pronouns (I, thou, he, who, but not 'it' or 'some' or 'something'³⁷). Every attempt to define Person by the general concept results in a misunderstanding because the general concepts imply essences and not Persons. The very general concept of Person is an abstraction, a generalization of our reason. In fact there exists only the plurality of unique persons and not a "person-in-general". Augustine was embarrassed by the very existence of such a generic concept³⁸, but an abstraction is not a reality.

The influence of Greek philosophy on the Fathers was so great that they sometimes defined hypostasis as if it were an individual. St. Basil the Great and Leontius of Byzantium sometimes wrote that hypostasis is the essence plus personal attributes. John Damascene wrote that hypostasis is a 'lower form' or 'Circumscription' of nature, i.e. a limited essence.³⁹ The identification of Person with 'individuum' is impossible, since then God would become three individuals, and would be three Gods and not one God. Christ, then, would be separated from both the Trinity and mankind. Being a person, Christ has no particular essence as distinct from the Trinity, and the limitation of the human nature of Christ from the nature of other men is but relative: Christ is not only 'omoiousion' but 'omoousion' to the whole mankind. Properly understood, the Patristic tradition maintains that hypostasis is neither essence nor the 'individuum', but is the principle and the foundation of the individual existence of essence. Person is to nature as the principle of being and life is to their content; as the foundation of all attributes and actions is to the latter; as the particular and unique is to the common; as the subjective is to the objective. The person possesses the essence, the essence abides in the hypostasis.⁴⁰ The real content of the hypostasis is in its essence, therefore without essence it is void and non-existent. As to the essence, it has no foundation and no life. Without the Person it becomes a mere potentiality.

We know that one Person can hypostasize, i.e. contain in itself and give life to two natures, which then become indivisibly united in one being. The Son of God after the Incarnation never ceases to be man. The Person is capable of hypostasizing another nature, because the person is open and not limited, and this is precisely its distinctive feature. It can assume in its life that which does not belong to its own nature. However, it is to be noted that the Person always has a special tie with one of the natures which it hypostasizes, namely with the highest of the two (in Christ with Divinity, in man with the soul). The Person does not stand between two natures, but being rooted in the higher of the two it elevates the lower nature to the highest, and carries the higher nature into the lower. The Person as the foundation of existence, is the deepest element in the being, and it is naturally connected with what is the deepest part of each being, which is its spirituality.

In contrast with Greek philosophy, Orthodox theology considers the Person as the highest value and the principle of perfection.⁴¹ The more perfect is the being, the more perfect is the Person. There is a hypostatical principle in everything that exists, even in material things,⁴² but its paramount expression is in the spiritual.

From this conception of Person we can draw the following conclusions concerning Christology. If Christ is not one Person, then regardless of how perfectly two natures are united in him he is divided into two subjects, Son of God,

being God and Son of Man being man. In Christ then, there would be 'two sons', which was held against Nestorius and his predecessors of the Antiochean School.⁴⁴ Christ's hypostasis is not a separate part of his nature but the one focus of his Divine and human existence. One and the same Son of God has the fulness of the Divine and human life. One and the same lives all that is human and all that is Divine, and accomplishes and suffers everything as God and man. The personal attribute of Christ is 'One-sonship': as God, he is the eternal hypostatic image of the Father, as man, he is also the Son of God, adopting in himself all mankind to God.⁴⁷ Christ's hypostasis is the very Christ, but open to the whole being it hypostasizes, i.e. realizes in itself and assumes, first of all the divine nature, in which it exists eternally, and then its own human nature, born of the Theotokos. In a certain sense everything divine and created is related to Christ as God and man. Christ's hypostasis is thus the focus of the whole universe. To a certain extent each Person can claim to be the focus of whatever exists. However, the union of the Person with other beings takes place not only on the personal level, as a personal communion with someone or something, but it simultaneously becomes existent in nature and through the nature of the Person, thus becoming the substantial and undivided unity with others. Thus Christ is united to God and creation, both personally and naturally.

Chalcedonian Christology forbids any mixing of the hypostasis with the essence (or with any spiritual function: freedom, will, self-conscience, reason). For Christ, according to the Fathers, has not only two natures but, in them, two wills, two modes of self-conscience and freedom, yet one and the same Christ wills and thinks and leads a diune life (precisely a diune and not double), inasmuch as the Theandric life of Christ is indivisible just like his nature, on which Cyril of Alexandria always insisted.⁴⁸ To cite another favorite idea of his, Christ's hypostasis, although it hypostasizes two natures, is primarily and originally the hypostasis of the Son of God, becoming through the Incarnation that hypostasis of the human nature itself.⁴⁹ In Christ there is nothing that would be "between" divinity and humanity.

The Chalcedonian dogma is thus justified both from the religious and the theological points of view. The great inheritance of Patristic theology, one of its summits being the Council of Chalcedon, demands from us not only study but creative continuation. We must bring together Biblical and Patristic theology, clarify and sharpen its contents. In particular the problem of the structure of being, namely the corelation of Person, essence and life, must be ultimately clarified in Orthodox theology.

NOTES

- ¹ Cf. for example, Leo the Great 'Epis. ad Flav.' 5
- ² Cf. St. Athanasius, 'De Incarnatus', 41, 42.
- ³ Cf. John XIII 31-32; I John IX: 9-10; Rom. V: 8.
- ⁴ The whole Orthodox doctrine concerning the Divine Logos and the Holy Spirit confirms this; this doctrine was especially developed by St. Gregory Palamas.
- ⁵ In Christian theology 'hypostasis' can terminologically be equated with 'Person' and 'Nature', with 'essence'.
- ⁶ This disturbs Western theologians, much more 'individualistic' than the Eastern ones.
- ⁷ Essence as the principle of active life was called nature by Greek philosophers.
- ⁸ Cf. especially his 'Contra Nestor. et Eutych.'
- ⁹ Cf. his 'Capita Philosoph.' and 'De Fide Orth.'
- ¹⁰ Cf. St. Basil 'De Spir. Sancto', cap. 16; Didym. 'De Trinit.' i,i,c.IX1; II c 1 XII; St. John Damascene 'De Fide Orth.' 1,1,c.8,1,III c 5; Migne PG 95, 136; Theodore Abukara 'Opuscula' disp. 28. On the place of Amphilochias of Iconium cf. K. Hall 'Amphiloch. v. Ykonium' and Sallet, 'La Theologie d' Amphiloque' in 'Bull. de Litt. Eccl. 1905'.
- ¹¹ Cf. St. John Dam. 'De Fide Orth.' L.III.c.6
- ¹² Cf. St. Basil 'Ep. 38' 2,4.
- ¹³ For example S. Athanasius 'Ad Antioch' PG 26, 796; 'Decr. Nic. Syn.' 22,25; 'Ad Aphros' 4; 'Contra Arianos' Or. IV,1; St. Gregory of Nyssa 'De Com. Not.' PG 45, 184; St. Cyril of Alex. 'In Johan.' v,5; Leontius of Byz. 'Con. Nest. et Eutych.' PG 86, 1280; St. Maximus the Confessor 'Opusc. Theol. et Polit.' PG 91, c.261, 264; Anastasius Sinait. 'Hodegos' c.9; John Damas. 'De Duab.' vol.4; Dialect. 10, 11, 17, 18, 29, 44, 45, 65, 66; 'De Fide Orth.' 1 III,n.9.
- ¹⁴ Cf. St. John Damas. 'Dialect.' 5.
- ¹⁵ Ibid. 43.
- ¹⁶ St. Basil 'Epist. 236,6; St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. 33' 16; St. John Damas. 'Dial'. c. 5, 30, 39, 43, 44, 46. 'De Fide Orth'. c.I, 6, 7; c.III, 6; Theodorianos 'Disp. cum Armen.' PG 138, 125. Cf. Dict. de Theol. Cath. VII, 404.
- ¹⁷ Cf. St. Gregory of Nyssa 'Contra Eun.' PG 45, 308.
- ¹⁸ 'De Fide Orth.' 1 I c. 8. 1,III, c. 6; 'Dialect.' c. 42.
- ¹⁹ Cf. Leontius of Byz. PG 86, 1277; St. Maxim. 'Opusc. Theol. et Pol.' PG 91, 150; St. John Damas. 'Dialect'. 44. 'De Fide Orth.' L.III,(9).
- ²⁰ St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 42, 44, 66; 'De Fide Orth.' L.III,6; Suidas "Hypostasis in 'Lexicon'.
- ²¹ St. Gregory of Nyssa, 'Orat. Catech.' 1. St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' L. I, 7, 8; Cf. the definition of God: 'Persona est naturae rationalis individua substantia'.
- ²² St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. 33, 16; St. Greg. Nyssa 'De Com. Not.' PG 45, 184.
- ²³ This is for example a central idea in Th. de Regnon's excellent book 'Etudes de Theologie Positive sur la Sainte Trinite.'
- ²⁴ This justifies the 'rapprochement' between Person and individuum, for the latter as 'indivisible' acquires its indestructible wholeness from its person—the unique center of its existence.
- ²⁵ Cf. Dionys. of Alex., Mansi I, 1044; St. Athan. 'Contra Apoll.' I, 12; Epiphani. of Cypr. 'Haer.' 77, 29, 'Ancoratus'; Rusticus 'Disp. contra Acephalos' PL 47, 1239; St. John Damas. 'Dialect.' 37, 42, 65, 66. Suidas 'Lexicon'.
- ²⁶ Cf. for example St. Athan. 'Ad Adolph.' 3; St. Gregory of Nyssa, 'Contra Eunom.' PG 45, 705, 697; St. Gregory of Nazian. 'Orat. 38', 13; Cyril of Alexandria 'Anathem. IV; St. Leo the Great, 'Ad Flav.' 5; St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' L.III, 4, 7.
- ²⁷ Cr. St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 10, 41, 44, 48, 65, 66; 'De Fide Orth.' L.III, c. R. 3-7; L.IV, 5; St. Leo 'Ad Flav.' 3.

- 28 Cf. Nestorios 'Le livre d' Heraclide' and the studies by Jugie and Loofs.
- 29 'De Incarnat.' fragm. 8, PG 46, 981.
- 30 St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 66.
- 31 St. Basil, 'Epist 38' PG 32, 328; Epist. 236, 6; 'Adv. Eunom.' Lib. I, 10, Lib. II, 28; Lib. IV. St. Greg. of Naz. 'Orat. 33', 16. Leont. of Byz., 'Sal. Argum a Sev Object.' PG 86, 1915; 'Cont. Nest. et Eut.' Lib. 1280. St. John Damas. 'De Duab,' vol. 4. Dialectics 10, 11, 29, 42, 45, 65; De. Fid. Orth. Lib. I, 8, 12, 14, Lib. III, 5.
- 32 St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. I, 7, 8; Lib. III, 8.
- 33 Cf. Dionys. Alex. 'Mansi' I, 1044; St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. 33', 16; St. John Damas. 'Dialect.' 42.
- 34 St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. 33', 16; Leont. of Byz. 'Contra Nest. et Eutyech.' PG 86, 1281; St. John Damas. 'Dialect.' 5, 10, 16, 43; De Fide Orth. Lib. III, 6.
- 35 St. Basil 'Ep. 34', 3-4; Leont. of Byz. 'Sol. Argum. a Severo Object.' PG 86, 1917; St. John Damas. 'Dialect.' 13, 29, 30; 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. I, 8, Lib. III, 6.
- 36 Cf. Petrus 'De Trinitate' Lib. IV, c. 8, 5-10.
- 37 Cf. St. Greg. Naz., PG 37, 180; St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 8; 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. III, 7.
- 38 'De Trinitate' Lib. III, 7, 48, 9.
- 39 St. Basil 'Epis. 226', 6; 'Adv. Eunom.', Lib. I, 10; Lib. II, Lib. IV, 1; Leont. of Byz. PG 86, 1915, 1280, 1281, 1301; St. Maxim. 'Opusc. Theol. et Pol.' PG 91, 153, 260; St. John Damas. 'De Duab. Vol.' 4; Dial. 10, 11, 29, 44, 65.
- 40 Cf. St. Basil, 'Ep. 236', 6; 'Adv. Eunom.' Lib. I, 10, Lib. II, 27. Lib. IV, 1. St. Greg of Nyssa 'Contr. Eunom.' Lib I; 'De Can. Not.' PG 45, 182; 'Orat. Cathed.' 1; St. Augustine 'De Trinit.' Lib. 8, 6, 11; St. Maxim. PG 91, 153, 260; St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. III, 3, 4, 6, 9; 'Dialect.' 30. Theodore Aboukura 'Opusc. Disp.' 11; Suidas, 'Lexicon': "hypostasis". Theorianos, 'Disput. Cum Armen.' PG 133, col. 132-133.
- 41 Cf. St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. 33', 16.
- 42 St. John Damascene affirms this on several occasions in his 'Capita Philosophica'.
- 43 Cf. Diodorus of Tarsus, PG 33, 1559, 1560, 1561; Theodore of Mopsuest. 'De Incarn.' Fragments VII, VIII, PG 41, 972-976, 1013, 981, 992, 993, 994, 998.
- 44 Cf. St. Athanasius, 'Tomus ad Antioch.' 7; St. Greg. Naz. 'Orat. II', 23, 'Orat. XXXIX, 19; St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 66.
- 45 St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. III, 8.
- 46 Cf. St. Ignatius of Antioch 'Ad Polyc.' 3; Justin 'Dial. c. Tryph.' 67; St. Athanasius 'Contr. Apoll.' Lib. II, 2, 5. St. Gregory of Nyssa 'Contr. Eunom.' PG 45, 712; St. Leo 'Ad Flav.' 4; St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 17, 65; 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. XI, 22, Lib. III, 3-8.
- 47 Cf. Lk. III, 23, 38; Galat. IV, 4-7.
- 48 Cf. St. John Damas. 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. III, 3, 7, 14-19.
- 49 St. Cyril of Alexandria 'De Recta Fide ad Reginas, I' PG 76, 1205; St. Basil 'Ep. 261', 3; St. Cyril of Jerus. 'Cat.' 12, 26; St. Greg. of Naz. 'Orat. II, 23, 'Orat. XXXVII, 2; St. Greg. of Nyssa PG 45, 705; St. Leo 'Ad Flav.' 2, St. John Damas. 'Dial.' 44, 66; 'De Fide Orth.' Lib. III, 7-9, 11. St. Athanasius 'De Incarn.' 1, 9, 15, 16, 44, 45.

The Veneration of the Relic of the True Cross at the End of the Sixth and the Beginning of the Seventh Centuries*

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I was a little uneasy at the honor done to me when I was asked to speak about the veneration of relics during a period between the beginning of Maurice's reign to the end of that of Heraclius. The subject was included in the program of a Symposium dedicated to this period, a period characterized, as we know, by profound changes in the structure and organization of the Byzantine state.¹ It would be natural to conclude *a priori* that parallel changes took place in the sphere of religious life, and consequently in the veneration of relics. At first sight, it seemed to me that this was not so. But man is so constructed and according to Pascal, this is both his weakness and his greatness, he always keeps an intermediate position between two opposites. The positive aspect of the problem occurred to me after I had seen its negative side. Such is the form of the present study, first I shall give reasons which might lead one to suppose that nothing new arose in the veneration of relics between the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th centuries, and then draw attention to those factors which ought, on the contrary, to be considered as both novel and specific. The conclusion will give us the chance to balance these contradictory observations; the result will indicate that the question was worthy of consideration.

We shall keep ourselves within the bounds of a study of the veneration of the True Cross. Andre Grabar had collected archaeological and literary evidence which proves that the general atmosphere of the 6th and 7th centuries was hardly favorable to the cult of local saints, whereas it encouraged every form of worship of Christ and His Mother Mary, the latter being considered as the throne and literally, the dwelling place of God.² In the sphere of relics, particular attention was paid to Christological ones, and above all to those connected with the Childhood and the Passion. A survey of the history of the relic of the True Cross supplied me with the necessary material for an evaluation of what it really meant at the time of the reign of Heraclius. It would have been interesting to establish a parallel with observations about the devotion to the relics of the Virgin and to her icons, which at that time were the objects of a particular devotion, to such an extent that after Constantinople being saved — or so it was believed — by some of them during the sieges of 619 and 626, the city was placed under the protection of the Mother of God.³ However, it seemed preferable to concentrate our attention exclusively upon the veneration

of the relic of the Cross, so as to be able to study the question in greater detail. Other categories of relics will be mentioned only in so far as they provide complementary information with a direct bearing upon our subject.

Let us be even more specific. It is only the relic of the Cross which will be under discussion, and not its representations or symbolism. We have two different expressions of worship whose development does not coincide in time. St. Paul, and since the first century the Apostolic Fathers who were influenced by him, recognised the Cross as the characteristic shape of Christianity — its synonym, as it were. Toward the middle of the second century, St. Justin, a Syrian by birth, brought the same ideas to Rome. From then on the conception developed steadily, culminating in the recognition of the symbol of the Cross, which St. Cyprian was apparently the first to proclaim around the year 248.⁴ But at that time there was as yet no question of the wood of the True Cross. There is no reliable evidence with reference to this relic prior to the Catechetical sermons delivered by St. Cyril of Jerusalem in 347.⁵ Approximately one century elapsed between the final stages in the development of the veneration of the sign of the Cross and the appearance of the veneration of its wood. A new form of devotion came into being at a time when an allied form had already found its full expression. There again it is possible to trace a line of evolution, and it seems that it reached its culminating point towards the end of the 6th century or the beginning of the 7th century.

Yet this evolution was not only of a speculative nature. From the moment when the faithful and the pilgrims began to adore the wood of the True Cross, they also began to detach particles of it, to such an extent that according to St. Cyril of Jerusalem: "almost the whole universe" was full of them.⁶ Research upon this point follows a very concrete scheme, the two principal aspects of which may be summarized as follows: a). has the number of testimonies with regard to the diffusion of the relic of the Cross always remained unchanged down through the centuries? b). if there have been changes, to what extent can they be related to a definite historical context?

It is here that we come up against the first difficulty which may cause us to consider the problem in a negative light. The data which we have at our disposal in this field are numerous enough to be presented in a statistical form. Most certainly one must allow for the gaps in our knowledge, yet the law of great numbers justifies the general conclusions which emerge from an examination of the collected references. The certainty would be still greater if all of these references were to be presented in the form of a graph, which would show their chronological distribution century by century. Indeed the resulting diagram would be characterized by a marked regularity, which corresponds to a concrete reality rather than to a purely chance result.

A few figures will illustrate this more clearly. The chronological curve which we have envisaged could be divided into two distinct parts. The first part, be-

ginning from the 4th to the 10th century, would be based upon a limited number of examples: ten to sixty for every period of hundred years. The second part would rest upon considerably greater number of testimonies, and would therefore be characterised by a much more accentuated rise. There is a difference of sixty-seven points between the 10th and 11th centuries. The progression continues steadily in a still more recent epoch. The 12th century provides one hundred and seventy-two examples, the 13th century up to two hundred and sixty. These figures undoubtedly represent a real blaze of devotion to the relic of the Cross, which must be due to the great renewal of pilgrimages toward the year 1000, and also to the movement of the Crusades which was its natural consequence.

But nothing of a similar nature is to be observed in the period with which we are directly concerned. I have scarcely been able to collect twenty-two texts or reliquaries illustrating the veneration of the True Cross during the 7th century. The total is inferior by one point to what was found in the 6th century, and is barely ten points higher than the evidence collected for the 5th century. If we consider only the testimony of numbers, we must conclude that the element of cult remained unaltered during a period when the most far-reaching changes were taking place in the political field — where Maurice and Heraclius were creating, out of the ruins of Rome, a new State that was Byzantium. The statement may appear deceptive if we try to establish a relationship of cause and effect between the great movements of history and the evolution of the veneration of relics.

The delusion is still greater — and this is our second difficulty — if we consider the matter from the more limited point of view of the history of art. It is true that the question is posed in a special way. The number of reliquaries attributed to the end of the 6th and the beginning of the 7th centuries might lead one to believe in a habit of worship greater, and above all in some way more palpable, than our statistics show it to have been.⁷ I have not taken these objects into account, because on closer inspection it seemed evident that they were wrongly dated. This meant renouncing the more convincing historical argument in our possession: the argument of things that we can see and touch.

It will be sufficient to examine two particularly characteristic examples, around which are grouped the majority of the remaining staurothecs which can be attributed in some way or other to our period. First, there is a pectoral cross which is preserved in the treasury of the basilica of Monza, and which has been identified as a phylactery sent by Pope Gregory the Great in 603 to Adulouvald, the son of Thedolina, Queen of Lombardy.⁸ The second reliquary with which we must acquaint ourselves is to be found in the Metropolitan Museum; it is generally known by the names of its two most famous possessors:

Fieschi, a relative of Pope Innocent IV, who brought it back from the Crusade, and Morgan, the American collector, who presented it to the Museum. Various scholars have dated it from the 6th to the 9th centuries. The best-known specialists in this field, Marc Rosenberg, puts it around the year 700, and this is the generally accepted date.⁹

Let us begin with the Monza cross. It is composed of two distinct parts: on one hand, a cross-shaped silver container in the front part of which is inserted a crystal plate, and, on the other hand, a metallic cruciform sheet lodged in the interior of the box, and visible through the transparent crystal. One surface of this sheet is inlaid in niello and represents the scene of the Crucifixion. The other side is engraved, and shows the Calvary surmounted by a cross which has been hollowed out so as to hold several particles of the True Cross. This rather unusual construction should be borne in mind when discussing the date.

The attribution of the cross to Gregory the Great has already aroused objections; yet strangely enough most of the scholars continue to cling to it, as if the prestige of the name of the great Pope should outweigh every other consideration.¹⁰ However, it would seem that we must definitely resign ourselves to its renunciation. Adulouvals, the son of Thedolina, did indeed receive a cross from Gregory the Great — it is mentioned in a letter of the latter¹¹ — but its identification with the cross preserved at Monza rests solely upon the evidence of two late inventories of the treasure of the basilica, one of which dates from the 17th and the other from the 18th century.¹² Similar texts going back to the 10th century contain no such indication, and in general there is no reference to a relic of the True Cross.¹³ Two fragments of this relic are mentioned in an inventory drawn up in 1022, another one is quoted in an inventory of 14th century, but there is no mention made either of Adulouvald or of Gregory the Great.¹⁴ The tradition which names these two personages is therefore of a late date, and must be given up.

However there is another text which is well worthy of our attention: that is the description, extraordinarily precise for the day, of a pectoral cross which the Patriarch Nicephoros I of Constantinople sent to Pope Leo III in 811, with a letter informing the Pope of his election.¹⁵ Like the cross of Monza, the front part of this object was made of crystal plate. A smaller metallic cross containing several pieces of the holy Wood was similarly enclosed inside. Finally, the decoration, again like the Monza cross, was composed of pictures inlaid in niello, as shown by the technical term *eikonosmene di' enkauseos* used in the letter of Nicephoros. Thus the resemblance is remarkable in both counts, yet the example which is dated for certain, that is to say the cross of Nicephoros I, is of the beginning of the 9th, and not of the 7th century.

One would be tempted to attribute the cross of Monza to the same period, if one little detail did not compel us to lower that date once again. This time a

comparison can be drawn with a pectoral cross preserved in the Benaki Museum in Athens, which is definitely allied in composition to the encolpion of Monza, so much so that we are obliged to reconcile them in time as well.¹⁶ Here our attention is drawn to the *titulus* of the cross carved upon the intermediate sheet of the encolpion of the Benaki Museum, which is in the rather unusual form of a clover leaf. This detail also distinguishes a sheet of the same kind inserted into the casing of the icon of Chachuli in Georgia, which must also have originally formed part of a pectoral cross, but which almost certainly dates from the 11th century.¹⁷ This time the technique used is that of enamel and not of niello. The comparison remains valid, nevertheless, because to my knowledge there are no other objects with the same distinguishing feature in existence. In spite of the generally accepted opinion, it is therefore possible to date the cross of the Benaki Museum, and consequently the Monza cross, to a period roughly in the vicinity of the year 1000.

Similar remarks are suggested by the reliquary of the Metropolitan Museum. The article is in the form of a little rectangular box, divided by partitions in the form of a cross. This leads one to imagine that in all probability it was a staurotheca. The edge and exterior of the lid are decorated with cloisonne enamels, which, upon examination, convinced Marc Rosenberg that it dated from around the year 700. It remains to be seen whether this date can be maintained if we consider the inside of the lid, which is ornamented in niello-work like the crosses of Monza and of the Benaki Museum.

Four successive scenes are distinguishable: the Annunciation, the Nativity, the Crucifixion and the Descent into Hell. Our attention is immediately drawn to the iconography of the Descent into Hell. It centres around the figure of Christ, who is raising up Adam and Eve and tramples upon the vanquished Hades, a little to one side, the Biblical Kings David and Solomon await their turn to be delivered. The subject made its appearance in Christian art from the early 8th century onwards,¹⁸ which would make Rosenberg's point of view acceptable if the most ancient images had not offered a different choice of personages. On the first known example — a mosaic in the oratory of John VII in the Vatican (705-707) — there was in all likelihood neither Eve nor the two Biblical Kings.¹⁹ The Kings appear at the beginning of the 9th century, in the chapel of St. Zeno in Santa Praxeda in Rome, but there again the composition is different, the artist portrayed an angel standing next to Christ.²⁰ In the other monuments of the 9th century, both in Rome — in the frescoes of St. Clemente²¹ and Santa Maria Antiqua²² — and in Byzantium — represented by psalters with marginal illustrations²³ — the Kings are missing, and the general effect is always rather different to what we see on the Fieschi-Morgan reliquary. We have to look to the 10th century to find a series of compositions identical to that of the Metropolitan Museum, either among the minor arts, as for example a byzantine enamel preserved at Chemokedi in Georgia,²⁴ or

in the paintings of Cappadocia, in the chapels of Guereme, El Nazar and Toqale Kilisse.²⁵

An examination of the epigraphy and style affords us complementary evidence. Comparison with a nielloed cross from the Dumbarton Oaks Collection gives us the chance to make some observations which are particularly interesting in that it is an object definitely attributed to the joint reign of Romanos II and Basil II, that is to say to the years 960-963.²⁶ The resemblance to the Fieschi-Morgan reliquary is considerable. First of all let us notice the shape of the letters, with their general appearance of square, squat little capitals, the *epsilon* with a horizontal stroke outsailing the alignment of the extremities of the loop, the latter being terminated by hyphens (an observation which also applies to the *sigma*), the *delta* with its enlarged base, the *rho* with a slanting vertical stroke and an over-large loop. The comparison is also valid with regard to the face of Christ, who is represented on the Fieschi-Morgan reliquary and on the cross from Dumbarton Oaks with a round bushy beard, eyebrows drawn with a single stroke, and eyes too close together and too high on the face. The latter feature is also characteristic of the image of Christ on the Monza cross, executed — as we have concluded — at a comparatively late date, and where we also saw the same method of indicating the arm's muscle by two strokes meeting in an acute angle and accompanied by two smaller vertical strokes. The eyes placed too high — on the forehead rather than below it — are also characteristic of the representation of Christ on another nielloed pectoral less well-known and for that reason even more worthy of note. This time we are referring to a jewel found at Kiev in Russia, in an 11th century tomb, and this chronological indication should be borne in mind.²⁷ Finally, other similarities are suggested by a triptych in the Georgian monastery of Martivili, which we have good reasons to attribute to the 11th century, and of which the back is inlaid in niello-work like the interior of the Fieschi-Morgan reliquary, the choice and distribution of the scenes being, moreover, almost identical in both cases.²⁸ Unless we accept as fortuitous such a sustained series of encounters, it really seems that the staurothecs of the Metropolitan Museum must be attributed to a far more recent period than has been admitted to date.

Such are the negative aspects of the problem. On the one hand there is no increase in the number of references relative to the cult of the True Cross during the period from the end of the 6th to the beginning of the 7th century. On the other hand the most important staurothecs from the point of view of the history of art, which were believed to be of that epoch, must very likely be dated around the year 1000. It remains to be seen whether this numerical paucity is not compensated by a change in the nature of the cult. Indeed the attitude of the faithful towards the relic is certainly of greater importance

than the number of fragments which were detached from it. To show that this was the case would be to give value to the positive aspect of the question.

Now a transformation most certainly took place in this category of ideas. From the 4th to the 7th centuries, the veneration accorded to the relic of the True Cross took on a new aspect. The comparison is effective essentially between the point of departure and the point of culmination. Sometimes it has seemed possible to approach the problem in greater detail, to work in periods of ten years rather than of hundred. In this context, the times of Maurice and Heraclius seem to be of primary importance.

First of all the sources: it is generally accepted that in the presence of a fragment of the True Cross the elected soul could always benefit by a mystical experience. At the end of the 4th century St. Jerome describes the emotion of St. Paulina prostrate and in tears before the cross of the Holy Sepulchre "as if she saw there the Saviour crucified".²⁹ The vision recalls those of the great Italian mystics Francis of Assisi or Catharine of Siena. But in addressing himself to simple people who were not saints, like Desiderius and his sister Serenilla, the same St. Jerome encouraged them to undertake the journey to the Holy Land solely because there they could see various relics of the Passion — and notably the Cross — but certainly not Christ himself.³⁰ Historical reminders without an absolute value, these relics were for the average pilgrim, first and foremost a practical means of directing the thoughts to the events described in the Gospels. The veneration of the wood of the Cross could only be in these circumstances "relative" or "honorary", which is the terminology adopted by the second Council of Nicaea.³¹

There is no doubt that the restriction applied especially to the most ancient period. For St. John Chrysostom, in the 4th century, the fragments of the True Cross which his contemporaries carried around their necks in gold settings constituted an expression of Faith and perhaps to a greater extent, a personal adornment.³² St. Jerome is more explicit in his disapprobation of the use of these phylacteries which seemed to him to be simply a superstition of "silly women" (*mulierculae*).³³ It is not less instructive to note the abstract nature of the arguments advanced in those days in favour of the cult of the wood of the Cross. For St. Cyril of Jerusalem, its existence was only a witness to the reality of the Incarnation and of the work of Salvation: Christ has been truly crucified if we see the Cross.³⁴ The same argument was developed again towards the middle of the 5th century by Pope Leo the Great.³⁵ Thus for theologians of that time it was a matter of rather cautious veneration. One might doubt its efficacy; if one accepted it, this was because it afforded matter for a dogmatic demonstration of Faith.

Such an attitude must be considered in the framework of the reaction to paganism. It would have been difficult for the Apologists to forget that the

gibbet of Calvary was wood and lifeless matter. The account which St. Ambrose left in 396 of the Invention of the Cross by St. Helen is a perfect example of this.³⁶ The Empress was torn between sentiment and reason. She wanted to kiss the wood which she recognised as "the remedy of immortality, the sacrament of salvation", but she also knew that it would be "an error of pagans and a vanity of impious" to adore anything other than the Christ-King. Nothing could summarise better the most ancient teaching of the Church on the subject of the worship of the True Cross.³⁷

Yet judging from the texts which have been preserved, a new stage in the development of this worship began at about the same time. The information is provided by a letter of St. Paulinus of Nola dating from the year 402. The thought can be summarised as follows: the Cross impregnated by the incorruptible blood of Christ and thus given a living force, *vis viva*, cannot be considered as a lifeless matter.³⁸ The argument was irrefutable. Theologians such as Saints John of Damascus³⁹ and Theodore Studites⁴⁰ supported it at the time of the Iconoclastic Controversy. From that time it has been the official teaching. The metaphor of St. Ambrose "the remedy of immortality" could be taken literally: the relic is an effective pledge of eternal life and is therefore worthy of veneration.

Because of this participation in divinity the True Cross had to receive the essential attributes of God: Eternity and Permanence. Theodosius, a pilgrim of the 6th century, believed that the part of the Cross against which the body of Christ had pressed had been taken up to Heaven, to remain there — whole and inviolable — until the Last Judgement.⁴¹ According to the teaching of Paulinus of Nola even that part which was left in the hands of men had acquired an indestructible integrity of some kind. The faithful might detach innumerable particles of it without the relic sustaining the least damage or its bulk diminishing as a result.⁴² In this respect there is an obvious difference between the veneration of the relic of the True Cross and that of the relics of the Saints. The Church believes that a splinter of bone or a handful of ashes preserves the fulness of the grace which resided in the body of a martyr.⁴³ With the relic of the Cross, the element of permanence — still more wonderful — became concrete and was transposed from the spiritual to the material plane. The very existence of this wood became a miracle. From the moment, miracles were to multiply around it. St. Paulinus was one of the first to benefit from them. When a fire broke out near his home he mastered it by holding a fragment of the True Cross out to the flames: *omnia ligna uorans ligno crucis uritur ignis*.⁴⁴ This phenomenon was certainly sufficiently strange as to lend itself to oratory. It is enough for our purpose to note that the possibility of supernatural intervention was already a phenomenon in its own right, and that this was new.

A chronological classification of texts referring to the Discovery of the Cross shows the change which took place, in this respect, in the development of a cult which suddenly found itself connected with wonders. In the oldest references, like the one of St. Ambrose quoted above, or another similar to it of St. John Chrysostom⁴⁵, there is no hint of any miracle which would enable St. Helen to identify Christ's gibbet, which was buried with those of the two thieves. The presence of the *titulus* sufficed, according to these writers, to determine the choice. It is only after the year 400 that we find, from the pen of Rufin, the final version of the legend which was generally accepted in the literature and art of the Middle Ages: it includes either a healing, or the resurrection from the dead of a man or woman.⁴⁶ The change of religious conception is obvious from that point of view. We must also take the lesser-known miracles into account; they are equally illustrative of the new direction taken by the devotion to the relic of the Cross from the beginning of the 5th century. The fire extinguished by St. Paulinus of Nola furnishes us with what is probably the first example of this new trend. Other examples, in ever increasing numbers, swell the ranks from the beginning of the next century. Our knowledge has a gap of roughly a hundred years, which is probably fortuitous. The reproaches levelled by St. Jerome in 398 against those of his contemporaries who carried around particles of the True Cross by way of phylacteries, suggest that already in those days, men's minds — or at any rate those of the more naive — were imbued with the idea of its supernatural property.

The series begins with the Life of St. Peter the Iberian, the son of a Georgian king, who was received at the court of Theodosius II around the year 421, and whose biography was written in about 500 A.D. The Saint kept a piece of the True Cross in a gold casket. This piece had been brought to him by some clerics returning from Jerusalem. On feast days he used to bring it out of his reliquary in order to adore and kiss it. One day, when a young man who had the best of intentions but who was in a state of impurity, tried to imitate his example, the relic immediately turned itself into a white dove, which flew out of the window of the Palace and was never seen again.⁴⁷ Meanwhile St. Peter succeeded in securing another fragment of the Cross, which he took with him to the Holy Land. On the journey a species of oil poured out of the relic in abundance. St. Peter anointed his body with this miraculous balm and found renewed strength.⁴⁸

This text is especially interesting in so far as it helps one to appreciate the kind of actual animism which could be attributed to a relic of the True Cross capable of turning itself into a bird and of flying. It might be compared, in this respect, to the beliefs of the oriental Docetae, who from the 2nd century onward supported the view that, like the soul of the world in the form of *chi* mentioned in the Timaeus of Plato (8, 36, BC), the Cross of Christ possessed

an existence of its own, and could therefore act, move, and even speak.⁴⁹ But to my knowledge there is no other example of this kind concerning the relic of the Cross.⁵⁰ According to St. Anastasius Sinaita, who wrote in the 7th century, the only uncreated element present at the time of the Crucifixion, was the Word; the wood of the Cross was no more so than the sun which illuminated the scene.⁵¹ If the Life of St. Peter the Iberian is not in accordance with such a peremptory statement, it must be admitted that at the beginning of the 6th century, beliefs of a rather dubious Orthodoxy sometimes triumphed over what was to become a firmly established truth one hundred years later. And this is further proof of the progressive advance in the veneration of the True Cross, where a logical evolution of thought is discernable even among the marvels.

Yet in the absence of life properly speaking, there was the "living power" which the doctors were able to discover in the wood of the relic. The oldest descriptions of this may be divided into several groups, which will acquaint us with the principal aspects of a devotion that was practical without a betrayal of Orthodoxy. We shall examine one category in particular, of which there seem to be no examples prior to the reign of Maurice.

An appropriate starting point is offered by the belief in the prophylactic power of the True Cross. In the letter accompanying the staurothec which he sent to Adulouvald, Gregory the Great describes the object of a salutary and curative phylactery, *filacta curavimus*.⁵² Thirty years earlier Gregory of Tours had already described the cures effected by a relic of the Cross which St. Radegonde had placed in her monastery of Poitiers.⁵³ Similar information is provided by the inscriptions engraved on the staurothecs, which often contain allusions to the power of these reliquaries to ensure the safety of those who owned them or had them made. The oldest example is a poem by Patriarch Methodios on a cross made at the expense of a certain Michael — possibly the emperor Michael III — who had thus acquired "a powerful guardian for life".⁵⁴ Prayers for providential help and succor constantly appear in other texts of the same kind. It is nevertheless remarkable that most of these demands refer to the life to come and to remission of sins. An allusion to the victory over the Spirit of Evil is contained in the verses engraved on the cross which the emperor Justin II and his wife Sophia sent to Pope John III between the years 565-578: "Justin with his consort has given to Rome the glorious treasure of the wood on which Christ overcame the enemy of men."⁵⁵ Devotion to the relic was based upon a spiritual concept which had no connection to the superstitious practices of the contemporaries of St. Jerome.

This did not mean that men ceased to attribute to the True Cross manifestations immediately perceptible to the senses. The curative balm mentioned in the Life of St. Peter the Iberian, and which the pilgrim Arculf noticed, was

of this kind. In the 7th century, Arculf described another fragment of the relic preserved in St. Sophia in Constantinople.⁵⁶ Similar information is given by various other texts, the only difference being that they mention some intermediary substance of a more common origin, and foremost, the oil which was either taken from the lamps lit in front of the True Cross, or was poured directly into *ampulae* which were held up to the relic, to be distributed later to the pilgrims.⁵⁷ Several passages in the Life of St. Sabbas, written in the first half of the 6th century, speak of the supernatural power of this oil, which enabled it to be used for the purification of haunted places, the healing of wounds and the exorcising of those possessed with devils.⁵³ A few years later Gregory of Tours⁵⁹ and Antonius of Piacenza⁶⁰ described the strange manner in which this oil could reach boiling point without being heated. Gregory of Tours, moreover, mentions yet another substance through which the same power could manifest itself. This time it was simply the water in which a piece of silk, previously used to wrap a portion of the True Cross, had been washed. The liquid thus sanctified by the intermediary of an intermediary was considered to be a sovereign remedy for fever.⁶¹

Another manifestation of the quasi-divine power of the wood of the Cross was the light which would burst from it in certain circumstances. In the time of Justinian, a large fragment of the True Cross was preserved at Apamea at Orontes in Syria; it was the custom to exhibit it once a year for the veneration of the faithful. When towards the year 540, Khusro I captured Antioch, the inhabitants of Apamea were concerned for their safety. They decided to have an exceptional propitiatory exaltation. During the ceremony a halo of flame surrounded the relic, which was interpreted as a happy omen. In fact Apamea was spared; the enemy was content with a heavy ransom.⁶² This story could be likened to one of Gregory of Tours, who tells how, on the night of Holy Friday, the church of the monastery of Poitiers was flooded with a mysterious light, which burst out from the fragment of the True Cross brought there by St. Radegonde.⁶³ The same theme of a supernatural light appears in many other texts. Antoninus of Piacenza gave it a poetic form in his description of a star which, when the relic preserved in the Holy Sepulchre was carried in some procession, followed its progress in the sky.⁶⁴ Elsewhere it is described only as a dazzling light. Such was the case, according to the Armenian historian Sebeos, of the light which appeared on the field of a battle fought in the Atropatena in 595, in order to reveal the corpse of a soldier who was carrying a *staurotheca* on his chest.⁶⁵

The examples which we have reviewed illustrate both the diversity and a certain lack of originality in the miraculous happenings which men delighted in attributing to the True Cross from relatively ancient times. As regards the virtues of Grace and Permanence, the doctors drew a distinction, as we have

already said, between the major dominical relic and the ashes of the Saints, but the difference vanishes in the sphere of thaumaturgy proper. Like St. Paulinus of Nola, who mastered a fire with the help of a piece of the holy Wood, Gregory of Tours put out another flame with a reliquary containing remains of the Virgin, the Apostles and St. Martin.⁶⁶ The second event took place some hundred and fifty years after the one which seems to have prefigured it. But elsewhere it is definitely the relics of the Saints which have chronological priority. Towards the end of the fourth century the number of cures effected by their power caused St. Augustinus to suggest the opening of special registers—*libelli miraculorum*—, an idea which might have been inspired by the descriptions of divine healings which the Ancients engraved in the temples of Esculapos.⁶⁷ The use of oil gathered before the tombs of Martyrs is attested from the same epoch.⁶⁸ Still earlier is the very common hagiographical *topos* according to which there is a source of an ineffable light in the body of a Saint, and in every place blessed by some biblical reminder.⁶⁹ At the beginning of the 6th century, that is to say more than a hundred years after St. Augustinus, the same beliefs and practices crystallize around the relic of the Cross. There is nothing further to be said about the majority of examples which have been gathered so far.

Yet there is still another type of manifestation of the supernatural power of the True Cross, the oldest example of which dates back to the end of the 6th century and which rests on the belief in the *semper victrix* virtue of the wood on which Christ died to overcome death and the Spirit of Evil. The inscriptions carved on the staurothecs have already shown us what any believer could expect from the Cross in the way of individual help and assistance. Similarly there was nothing that could better guarantee the safety of a Christian State. The Imperial victory—an attribute and corollary of the supreme power—was symbolized by a cruciform emblem almost immediately after the establishment of the Peace of the Church.⁷⁰ Later, the relic of the Cross was substituted for its symbol. In 593, when an expedition was leaving for Thrace, the Emperor Maurice had given the order that a fragment of the holy Wood should be fixed on the top of a golden lance, in front of the army, like the Constantinian labarum.⁷¹ The same lance in all likelihood was brought in the first campaign directed by Heraclius against the Persians in 622.⁷² At a more recent time the lance was replaced by a genuine reliquary, which was entrusted to the care of one of the dignitaries of the Palace, but the custom of transporting the relic around in military expeditions continued just the same. In the 10th century Constantine Porphyrogenetos codified it in the Book of Ceremonies.⁷³ From the following century, the sovereigns of the Holy Germanic Empire,⁷⁴ and later on the Slav princes⁷⁵ and the Latin Emperors of Constantinople⁷⁶ adopted it. Thus a tradition was adopted which was to endure throughout the Mid-

dle Ages. The first example can be dated at the end of the 6th century, unless we include texts referring to the miracle which took place at Apamea in Syria toward the year 540, but which was connected with the idea of a danger having been averted rather than with the idea of a real victory.

Indeed the notion of victory is inseparable from every manifestation of Faith. The Saints who fought the good fight were victorious like their Master before them, and their relics likewise became a guarantee of the city which had given them shelter. As early as the 4th century St. John Chrysostom and St. Basil of Caesarea compared the bodies of the martyrs of Sebastia and of Egypt to ramparts and strong towers, against which all assaults of the enemy would be dashed to pieces.⁷⁷ There again one could say that chronological priority belongs to the relics of the Saints. But we must not be misled. The inscription on the staurotheca of Justin II and Sophia in St. Peter of Rome, has already clarified the unearthly nature of the victory of Christ over the Spirit of Evil through the Cross. The belief in the victorious power which the latter could wield here on earth is also wider in its scope if we compare it with the same functions attributed to the ashes of the martyrs. The *Miracula* of St. Demetrios of Salonica, the first book of which was probably written about the year 615,⁷⁸ shows that the veneration accorded even to the most illustrious military saint was within the boundaries of a municipal cult. On the contrary the cult of the relic of the True Cross—the instrument and pledge of the victories of the basileus—was established since the end of the 6th century, on a far broader basis affecting the entire population of the Empire.

The difference is considerable, and a final example will help us to appreciate the exceptional part which the relic of the True Cross was henceforth called upon to play in the destinies of the Byzantine State. It is one of the most memorable episodes in the reign of Heraclius, a kind of religious triumph during the course of which a piece of the True Cross, which one of the generals of Khusro II had removed from the Holy Sepulchre in 614, was restored to its rightful place.⁷⁹ A later tradition interpreted this event as the culminating point of Heraclius' Persian wars, which as a result acquired the aura of a real pre-Crusade undertaken in order to deliver the most famous of the relics of Christendom. Still it is more likely that the truth was very different. The Byzantine empire attacked Persia in 622, that is to say eight years after the relic had been taken; the ceremony of restitution took place in 630, that is to say two years after the victory. Such a lack of haste looks suspicious if we try to pretend that all the undertaking took place because of the Cross. Moreover the facts given by the oldest historians lead one to suppose that the new Exaltation was based upon a fraud. The coffer in which the relic was carried still had its seals and locks intact, but the same sources specifically state that the Persians had opened it and had even trampled on its precious contents.

One is forced to admit that a rather clever bit of acting took place in Jerusalem in 630. It is possible that Heraclius had recourse to it in order to consolidate his religious authority which had been compromised by an incestuous marriage, a fact not without danger for the integrity of the Empire, where everything to do with matrimony took on a special importance. The Eastern provinces, just reconquered, would have gone over to the enemy for much less, as the overwhelming success of Islam was to prove. But for our purpose it is important simply to note that the remedy chosen to save the situation was the relic of the True Cross. Special significance must have been attached to it. The historian Sebeos has preserved a vivid recollection of the emotion aroused by the opportune action of Heraclius: "There was much joy that day in Jerusalem; the noise of weeping and sighing, many tears, a great flame in men's hearts, a great depth of feeling on the part of the king, the princes, all the soldiers and inhabitants of the town; and nobody was able to sing the Lord's hymns on account of a vast and deep tenderness".⁸⁰

Such a text, even if we allow for rhetoric — but Sebeos, as a matter of fact, usually writes with simplicity — shows the influence which the devotion to the True Cross exercised over men. The numerical facts provided by statistics, the small number of reliquaries of that period which have been preserved (and I have tried to diminish this number still further!) are of less significance by comparison. The fragments of the True Cross about which we know from the evidences of the time of Maurice and Heraclius are not more numerous than in the past, but it would seem that more importance was attached to them and that each particle of that wood had become heavier, as it were, on the scales of Faith. At the end of the 4th century St. Jerome could propose the view of the True Cross as the aim of an edifying journey, while criticizing those who used it for amulets. The miracles which men were pleased to attribute to this relic a century later may still be compared to performances of a purely magical nature, or else are indistinguishable from other wonders performed by any other holy substance. However from the reign of Maurice, the True Cross appears as a tool of victory used to secure the salvation of the whole Empire. This evolution is still more noticeable at the time of Heraclius, who knew how to turn the devotion aroused by the relic to political ends. The text of Sebeos which has just been quoted seems to indicate the reason for it. The cult of the wood of the Cross was no longer only the concern of theologians, or of crowds avid for miracles: it had also penetrated the hearts of men. The masters of the Christian Universe could no longer ignore it.

Such a conclusion offers more than a simple contribution to the history of relics. It is indeed, a distinct illustration of the new spirit which penetrated Byzantium at the end of the 6th century. The question of Faith was the order of the day in an Empire whose destinies were actually to be linked with those

of Christendom. From that moment, the great dominical relic must become its supreme defender, and the cult of the True Cross a State institution. The French neologism "etatisation" will serve to describe how the Instrument of the Passion was now used as an instrument of Imperial propaganda. Our study will, in this respect, bring a positive contribution to the discussions of a Symposium dedicated to the particular characteristics of a world in the making.

NOTES

* A lecture given in 1957 at the Annual Symposium of the Dumbarton Oaks Research Library and Collection.

¹ Cf. G. Ostrogorsky, *Geschichte des byzantinischen States*, Munich, 1952, pp. 66 sq. et 75 sq.

² A Grabar, *Martyrium, Recherches sur le culte des reliques et de l'art chretien antique*, Paris, 1946, I, p. 377 sq.; II, p. 354.

³ Cf. *Revue de l'Histoire des Religions*, CXVII, 1944, p. 93 sq.

⁴ For this development, see M. Sulzberger, *Le symbole de la Croix et les monogrammes de Jesus chez les premiers chretiens, Byzantion*, II, 1925, p. 349 sq.

⁵ Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catecheses mystagogicae*, IV, 10; X, 19 et XIII, 4 (Migne, PG, XXIII, col. 469, 688 et 776).

⁶ Op. Cit., ibidem.

⁷ Thus, according to E. King, all the encolpia in bronze of the type known as "Palestinian" attributed to this period, would have been staurotheques, the author gives 16 examples (*The Date and Provenance of a Bronze Reliquary Cross in the Museo Cristiano, Atti della pontif. Accad. Romana di archaeologia*, S. III, *Memorie*, II, 1928, p. 193 sq.).

⁸ M. Rosenberg, *Geschichte der Goldschmiedekunst auf technischer Grundlage*, Frankfurt a./M., 1910 sq.: *Niello bis zum Jahre 1000 nach Chr.* P. 53 sq., fig. 43-46.

⁹ Rosenberg, *Geschichte: Zellschmelz*, III, p. 31 sq., fig 53-57 et *Niello*, p. 61 sq., fig. 50-57. Cf. O. von Falke et H. Frauberger, *Deutsche Schmelzarbeiten des Mittelalters*, Frankfurt a./M., p. 3 sq. pl 2.

¹⁰ See the bibliography drawn up by Rosenberg, *Niello*, p. 54. the author himself accepts the attribution to Gregory the Great: see also King, *The Date*, p. 200. The weakness of the argument was already pointed out in the 18th century in the work of Cardinal S. Borgia, *De Cruce Veliterna commentarius*, Rome, 1780, p. 140.

¹¹ Gregory the Great, *Regestri*, IV, 12 (*MGH, Epist.*, II, p. 431).

¹² S. Barbier de Montault, *Le tresor de Monza, Bulletin Monumental*, XLVI, 1880, p. 24 sq.

¹³ Ibidem, p. 450 sq.

¹⁴ Ibidem pp. 476-477 and XLVII, 1881, p. 736.

¹⁵ Mansi, *Concilia*, XIV, p. 56. Cf. V. Grumel, *Les Regestes des Actes du Patriarchat de Constantinople*, II, 1936, no. 382.

¹⁶ Benaki Museum, Room III, Showcase 32, No. 15 cf., *Benaki Museum, Guide, Athens*, 1936, p. 31. The object is still unedited.

¹⁷ W. Dehobadze-Ziziehwilli, *Los esmaltes del icono de Jajuli*, tirage a part de *Archivo Espanol de Arte*, no. 97, p. 11, pl. VI b.

¹⁸ Cf. E. Kosteckaja, *In Respect of the Iconography of the Resurrection of Christ, Seminarium Kondakovianum*, II, 1928, p. 61 sq. (in Russian).

¹⁹ W. de Gruneisen, *Sainte Marie Antique*, Rome, 1911, pl. LXVI.

²⁰ J. Wilpert, *Die romischen Moasiken und Malereien*, Freiburg i. Br., 1917, III, pl. 114, 4.

²¹ Ibidem, IV, pl. 209.

²² Gruneisen, Op. Cit. Fig. 94.

²³ Kosteckaja, op. cit., pl. IX, 2-3.

²⁴ A. Grabar, *L'Empereur dans l'art byzantin*, Paris, 1936, fig. 11.

²⁵ G. de Jerphanion, *Les eglises rupestres de Cappadoce*, I, Paris, 1925, pl. 31, 3: 34.2; 41.4; 67.2.

²⁶ *The Dumbarton Oaks Collection, Harvard University, Handbook*, Washington, 1955, no. 135, pp. 56 et 66 and for the date, V. Laurent in *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, XIV, 1956, p. 299.

²⁷ N. Zakrevskig, *A description of Kiev*, II, Moscow, 1868, p. 634, pl. 10, V. Prochorov, *Christian Antiquities*, St. Petersburg, 1875, pl. XI (both works are in Russian).

²⁸ G. Tchubinaschwili, *Ein Goldschmiedtriptychon des VIII-IX Jahrg aus Martiwili, Zeitschrift fur Bildende Kunst*, LXIV, 1930-31, p. 81 sq., fig. 4. The author, like N. Kondakov, is in favor of a date which is too early. The arguments in support of a more recent date are given by C. Amirenachvili, *The History of Georgian Art*, Moscow, 1950, p. 230 sq. (in Russian).

²⁹ S. Jerome, *Peregrinatio sanctae Paulae*, 6 (T. Tobler, *Itinera Hierosolymitana et descriptiones Terrae Sanctae bellis sacris anteriora*, I. Geneve, 1877, p. 32).

³⁰ S. Jermeo, *Epistolae, XLVII ad Desiderium* (Migne, *PL*, XXII, col. 493).

³¹ Actio VII (Mansi, *Concilia*, III, col. 405) ; cf. Actio IV (ibidem, col. 132).

³² St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia quod Christus sit Deus* (Migne, *PG*, XLVIII, col. 826).

³³ St. Jerome, *Commentaria in Evangelium S. Matthaei*, 4 (Migne *PL* XXVI, col. 168).

³⁴ Op. Cit., Ibidem.

³⁵ Leo the Great, *Epistolae, CXXXIX* (Migne, *PL*, LIV, col. 1105 sq.).

³⁶ St. Ambrose, *De obitu Theodosii*, 46 (Migne, *PL*, XVI, col. 1401).

³⁷ The same theory has been put forward with regard to images: J. Bidez, *Philostorgius Kirchengeschichte*, Leipzig, 1913, p. 78 (*GCS*, XXI). Cf. The remarks of E. Kitzinger, who draws attention to interesting antecedents in pagan apotheotics (*The Cult of Images in the Age before Iconoclasm, Dumbarton Oaks Papers*, VIII, 1954, p. 137). Since the text of Philostorgius was written in 426 at the earliest, we can see that in this case as in many others, the veneration of relics evolved more rapidly than that of icons.

³⁸ S. Paulin of Nole, *Epistolae, XXXI*, 6, *ad Severum* (*CSEL*, XXIX, p. 374).

³⁹ St. John Damascene, *De Fide Orthodoxa*, IV, 11 (Migne, *PG*, XCIV, col. 1129 sq.). Cf. The Patriarch Nicephorus, *Antirretica contra Constantinum* (Migne, *PG*, C, col. 429).

⁴⁰ Theodore Studite, *Canon of the 3rd Sunday in Lent, Ode 4* (*Triodion*, 1930, p. 219).

⁴¹ *De situ Terrae Sanctae*, 8 (Tobler, *Itinera*, I, p. 64). The tradition could have been based upon a verse from *Matthew XXIV*; 30: cf. St. John Chrysostom, *Homilia de Cruce et de Latrene* (Migne, *PG*, XLIX, col. 403 et 413).

⁴² Op. Cit. ibidem, The assertion has been supported by more recent theologians for example, Constantin Doukakes, *Megas Synaxaristes, September*, Athens, 1894, p. 168.

⁴³ St. Gregory of Nazianzen, *Oratio IV contra Julianum* (Migne, *PG*, XXXV, col. 589) ; Theodoret of Cyr, *De martyribus* (Migne, *PG*, LXXXIII, col. 1012) ; s. Victrice of Rouen, *De laude sanctorum* (Migne, *PL*, XX, col. 451).

⁴⁴ S. Paulin of Nole, *Carmina, XXVIII*, vv. 110-137 (*CSEL*, XXX, p. 296 sq.).

⁴⁵ St. John Chrysostom, *In Soannem homilia LXXXV*, 1 (Migne, *PG*, LIX, col. 461).

⁴⁶ Rufin, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, I, 7-8 (Migne, *PL*, XXL, col. 475 sq.) There is an extensive bibliography of works with a bearing upon the legend of the Discovery in the *Dictionnaire de Archeologie et de Liturgie Chretiennes* of Dom Cabrol, s.v. "Croix (*Invention et Exaltation de la Vraie*)" and in the *Dictionnaire de la Bible* de Vigouroux, s.v. "Croix".

⁴⁷ R. Raabe, *Petrus der Iberer, Ein Charakterbild zur Kirchen-und Sittengeschichte des funften Jahrhunderts*, Leipzig, 1895, p. 29 sq.

⁴⁸ Ibidem, p. 41 sq.

⁴⁹ Cf. W. Bousset, *Platons Weltseele und das Kreuz Christi, Zeitschrift fur Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft*, XIV, 1913, p. 273 sq. the examples of the apocryphal literature collected by E. Kantorowitch, *The Kings Advent and the Enigmatic Panels in the Door of Santa Sabina, The Art Bulletin*, XXVI, 1944, p. 225 sq.

⁵⁰ We cannot take into account the liturgical customs and texts of a more literary than dogmatic character which show that the relic of the true cross could, in certain circumstances receive the attributes of a living person, for example it could preside over councils, (Mansi, *Concilia*, XVI, col. 309) or be baptised (S. Der Nersessian, *Image Worship in Armenia and its Opponents*, *Armenian Quarterly*, I, 1946, p. 76 sq.; cf. H. Delehaye, *Synaxarium Ecclesiae Constantinopolitanae*, Bruxelles, 1902, pp. 856 et 860). There is no doubt that in these cases the part played by metaphor is predominant. Nevertheless it is a different question when we turn to the legends, sometimes of a relatively late date, about crucifixes which would seem to have been convincingly endowed with an appearance of life: see especially, *Vita S. Thomas Aquinatis*, VI, 35 (*AA. SS.*, Mars, I, p. 669) *Vita S. Joannis Gualberti*, I, 3 (*AA.*, *SS.*, Juillet, III, p. 328). There again, the expression of the cult of the symbol of the cross on the one hand, and of its relics on the other, do not coincide.

⁵¹ Anastasius Sinaitus, *Viae Dux*, 13 (Migne, *PG*, LXXXIX, col. 200).

⁵² *MGH, Epist.* II, p. 431.

⁵³ Gregory of Tours, *In Gloria Martyrum*, I, 5 (*MGH, SS. rer. merov.*, I, 2, p. 490 sq.).

⁵⁴ S. Mercati, *Note d'epigrafia bizantina*, *Bessarione*, XXIV, 1920, p. 195 sq.

⁵⁵ E. Diehl, *Inscriptiones latinae christianae veteres*, Berlin, 1925, p. 379, No. 1954.

⁵⁶ Adamnanus, *Arculfus relatio de locis sanctis*, III, 3 (Tobler, *Itinera*, I, p. 193 sq.).

⁵⁷ For example, Gregory the Great, *Regesti*, VIII, 3 (*MGH, Epist.*, II, p. 36). Phials dating from the 7th century and made especially to hold this oil, are preserved among the treasure of Monza Bobbia.

⁵⁸ Cyril of Scythopolis, *Vita S. Patris nostri Sabae*, 27, 45 and 63 (J. B. Cotelier, *Ecclesiae Graecae Monumenta*, Paris, 1686, III, p. 254, 291 and 392).

⁵⁹ Gregory of Tours, *Op. Cit.*, I, 5, p. 490 and possibly I, 14, p. 498.

⁶⁰ Antoninus of Plaisance, *Perambulatio Locorum Sanctorum*, 20 (Tobler, *Itinera*, I, pp. 102 and 125 sq.).

⁶¹ Gregory of Tours, *op. cit.*, I, 6, p. 491 sq.

⁶² Procopius, *De bello Persico*, II, 11 (Bonn, I, p. 200 sq.); Evagrius, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, IV, 26 (J. Bidez-L. Parmentier, p. 173). Cf. the description by the same authors of the deliverance of Edessa, which was besieged in 544 (Kitzinger, *op. cit.*, p. 103 sq.). In this case, however, the texts do not agree. Evagrius, who was writing towards the year 593 attributed the event to flames springing from an ikon of Christ. Procopius, whose account appeared in 550 or 551 makes no mention of a miracle. We must conclude that what was admissible, with regard to the relic of the Cross, towards the middle of the 6th century, only became so fifty years later in respect of the icon. (cf. above note 37).

⁶³ Gregory of Tours, *op. cit.*, I 5, p. 490.

⁶⁴ Antoninus of Plaisance, *op. cit.*, *ibidem*.

⁶⁵ Sebeos, *Histoire d'Heraclius*, 16, translated by Fr. Macler, Paris, 1904, p. 45.

⁶⁶ Gregory of Tours, *op. cit.*, I, 10a, p. 495. Cf. a text of a more recent date, referring to a fire extinguished in absolutely identical circumstances, thanks to a letter of St. Theodore Studite: *Vita S. Theodori Studitae*, 55 (Migne, *PG*, XCIX, col. 312). For general remarks concerning the hagiographic subject of flames "operating intentionally" G. Millet, *Sainte-Sophia avant Justinien*, *Orientalia Christiana Periodica*, XIII, 1947, p. 603 sq. The study of examples of the power of holy objects over all the elements, and especially over water as much as over fire, could be extended: see for example Gregory of Tours, *op. cit.*, I, 5, p. 491; Delehaye, *Synaxarium*, col. 231 (St. Gregory the Thaumaturge) 876 sq. (s. Miron of Cyprus) and the study by M. Politis in *Laographia*, III, p. 172.

⁶⁷ H. Delehaye, *Les premiers "Libelli miraculorum"*, *Analecta Bollandiana*, XXIX, 1910, p. 427 sq. Cf. already the *Acts of the Apostles* XIX, 12.

⁶⁸ E. Lucius, *Les origines du culte des saints dans l'Englise chretienne*, Paris, 1908, pp. 410 and 440; H. Delehays, *Saints and reliquaires d'Apamee*, *Analecta Bollandiana*, LIII, 1935, p. 237 sq. Various comparisons are also given regarding the water which Gregory of Tours used to transmit the creative power of the true Cross, for instance the

sick could be cured by drinking the water, in which the ring of St. Theophane had been soaked. Ed. Kurtz, *Zwei griechische Texte über die hl. Theophano, die Gemalin Kaisers Leo VI*, *Memoires de L' Acad. Imp. des Sciences de St. Petersburg*, S. VIII, III, 2, 1898, p. 10.

⁶⁹ J. B. Lightfoot, *The Apostolic Fathers*, I, 2, London, 1889, p. 614. For the star mentioned by Antonia of Plaisance, which probably originates from the account of the Journey of the three kings, cf. Gregory of Tours, op. cit., I, 1, p. 488 (the well of the journey of the three kings, cf. Gregory of Tours, op. cit., I, 1, p. 488 (the well of the Annunciation) and John Moschos, *Pratum Spirituale*, 6 and 104 (Migne, PG, LXXXVII, col. 2857 and 2961) funeral procession of a hermit; a saint in prayer).

⁷⁰ Grabar, *l'Empereur*, p. 32 sq. Cf. A. Alföldi, *The Helmet of Constantine with the Christian Monogram*, *The Journal of Roman Studies*, XXII, 1932, p. 9 sq.

⁷¹ Theophylacte Simocatta, *Historia*, V. 16 (De Boor, p. 220).

⁷² Georges Pisides, *De expeditione Persica*, II, v. 252 sq. (Bonn, p. 107). Cf. *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, XI, 1953, p. 92.

⁷³ *De Cerimoniis*, *Append. ad lib. I* (Bonn, p. 485).

⁷⁴ For example, *Annales Altahenses maiores*, s. a. 1044 (MGH, SS, XX, p. 800).

⁷⁵ For example, *AA. SS.*, October, XI, col. 192, cf. *Revue des Etudes Slaves*, XXI, 1944, p. 97 sq.

⁷⁶ For example, Comte Riant, *Exuviae Sacrae Constantinopolitanae*, Geneva, 1877 sq., I, p. 154 sq.

⁷⁷ St. John Chrysostom, *Laudatio Martyrum Egyptiorum*, 1 (Migne, PG, L, col. 694); St. Basil, *Homilia in Sanctos XL Martyres*, 8 (Migne, PG, XLVI, col. 784). Df. Evagrius, op. cit., 13, p. 23 (with reference to all relics of St. Simeon Stylite).

⁷⁸ P. Lemerle, *La composition et la chronologie des deux premiers livres des Miracula S. Demetrii*, *Byzantinische Zeitschrift*, XLVI, 1953, p. 349 sq.; F. Barischitch, *The Miracles of Demetrius of Salonica as a historical source*. Belgrade, 1953, p. 33 sq. (in Serbian).

⁷⁹ The following can be studied in more detail in *Revue des Etudes Byzantines*, XI, 1953, p. 88 sq.

⁸⁰ Sebeos, op. cit., 29, p. 91.

The Mystical Encounter*

NICHOLAS ARSENEV

There are some preliminary questions about mystical experience, some weighty objections to handle. Is there not a strain of unnatural hysterical emotionalism in the so-called mystical experience, a self-indulgence in high-strung, exuberant, strange, if not abnormal, feelings and often even a self-induced, intentional, thus unnatural and artificial, fostering of such exceptional states of mind? This is true in many cases, but the fact that there are artificially produced, intentionally self-provoked states of mind does not exclude that there might be also genuine and spontaneous ones. But in general are those mystical states of mind healthy and acceptable from a moral, from a religious point of view, even if they are spontaneous and genuine? Is this not an inrush of tumultuous waves of suppressed passions and emotions streaming from our sub-conscienceness into our conscious mind, a morbid emotionalism submerging the sense of responsibility, which is so important in religious and moral life, that sober and humble standing before the face of God, united to moral endeavour and moral struggle which is basic for the Christian attitude? But on the other hand we see that there are many great mystics—especially among Christian saints—who are full of a deep sense of moral responsibility. There are the great mystics of the Christian East who feel strong misgivings and distrust as to all sorts of religious emotionalism and who sternly and decisively reject all kinds of disorderly exuberance of feeling, all kinds of spiritual “greediness”, all unripe pursuits of spiritual sensations. And herein they are also backed by some of the greatest among the mystical teachers of the Christian West—in first place by John of the Cross and Theresa of Spain. This emotional, unbalanced and unbridled exuberance is indeed often met in Mysticism and mystical writers, but it must be considered as an aberration, a falling away from the true Mystical line, as a yielding to the temptations of human emotional self-indulgence even in this holy field of religious experience. It means that this objection is valid in regard to many phenomena representing ebarrations of the mystical life, but not to the mystical life and mystical experience itself. And it is not true that mystical experience makes man unsuitable for the requirements and responsibilities of practical life, for the fulfilment of moral obligations, for the service of the brethren. Many great Christian mystics were also persons of a burning heroic self-forgetting love for the fellow-men and of immense achievements, even in the field of practical, social life. Let us think of the great founders of monasteries and monastic congregations

* Chapter from book, “Glimpses of Ultimate Reality.”

in the East and in the West, some of them were also great mystics; for example St. Francis of Assisi, St. Teresa de Jesus, St. Benedict and many others.

But the last and perhaps the weightiest of all objections still remains. Let us admit that there is a genuine Mysticism, which is not purely emotional self-indulgence, that some of the greatest heroes of religious life and of the life of loving self-dedication to God and the fellow-men have been mystics; moreover, let us admit that their mystical experience was that which inspired them to their heroic deeds of love and self-dedication, that those great Mystics belong to the highest summits of spiritual life attained by us. Then what does it mean? Are those not *exceptional* cases? What have they to do with *our* lives, with *our* case, with our goal, our achievements, our struggle? Is it not something which belongs to quite another level? True inspiring reverence, but hopelessly distant from us, bearing no resemblance to our experience and therefore having no practical bearing or presenting no practical applications for us? Is it not just a case to study from a psychological, a scholarly point of view (most interesting as—what in German is called “Grenzfall”—a case on the utmost margin of the experience) or to revere as an exceptional achievement of a few great and lonely individuals, far away from us and very unlike to us? Let us study Mysticism as an interesting chapter of comparative History of Religion, but let us admit that it is something, as it were, exotical, concerning us very little.

This point of view sounds very plausible, but it is utterly false; just the contrary is true. Genuine mystical experience—let it be vouchsafed only to a few individuals—is something of immense importance, of *central and decisive importance* for us all. It concerns us in a most direct and most stringent way. The mystics are pioneers of our race. They were concerned—in an exceptional in all-engrossing way—with what we are living from, with the central, the only really important Reality—with the Reality of God. They proclaim this all-decisive, this all-conditioning, this overwhelming Reality of God, being themselves captured and overwhelmed and subjected thereby. From immediate experience the mystics come to know that which is of utmost concern for us all. There are moments that decide their whole life. The soul is confronted with the Reality of God, with the Presence of Him who is Life Eternal. It is laid hand upon, it is captured thereby, often for life. So was it with Paul. Not he, but the Lord becomes the innermost inspiration and compass of his life. Not he lives forthwith, but Christ lives in him. He is only the unworthy servant: “Paul—the slave of Jesus Christ”. “Aichmalothesetai”—the soul is “made prisoner” of things sublime and unutterable, says Macarius of Egypt. The subjugating, transcending Reality is here, present and quite near. It has dawned on my sight and my eyes have suddenly been opened. I have touched the skirts of His garment and He has taken hold of me. I bow before

Him, and I fall to the ground before His immense Majesty, Power and Glory. I kneel before Him and adore Him.

There are always two sides, two aspects in authentical, mystical experience: the vision of the Majesty and Glory of God and of my misery, nakedness and smallness. This is especially characteristical and basic in a theistic attitude and it is of primary importance for Christian mystical experience. "Who am I, thy unworthy slave and the little worm before Thee?" said St. Francis of Assisi. "I cry and sob, when I see the all-transcending light and my own nakedness," says the Byzantine mystic of the XIth century—Symeon the New Theologian. I am nought, just dust and ashes and I own nothing. Now I know it, now at last I see it: because He has deigned to approach me, to reveal Himself to me. He in His mercy has condescended to stoop down to me. He is there, He knocks at the door, He wants me to let Him in. "My Lord, I am unworthy that Thou should enter under the roof of my house: for it is all in ruins. But DO enter! Say a word, and my sould will be healed" this is the trend of the prayers before the participation at the Lord's Supper, in the Christian East and West.

He is here, and I am falling on my face before Him. And I am dedicating all my life to Him. He has taken it, but I agree joyfully to it. There is bliss and certainty in this utter self-surrender. It is a burning away of all unworthy, selfish regards, of all scales, all rubbish, and uncleanness of the soul. For He is Fire devouring "O lamparas de fuego!" exclaims John of the Cross (O lightnings of fire!). Pascal writes on the very night of his conversion.

"From 11:30 in the evening till 1:50 at night—Fire!"—God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and not of the philosophers and the wise."

Here at last he finds: "Certainty, certainty . . . joy, peace!" And the soul overwhelmed sheds tears of joy and thankfulness before her God ("Joie, joie, pleurs de joie!"). The soul has found the peace of God, it means that now she is rooted, she knows where she belongs to and that in Him is peace.

And there begins a transvaluation of all values. All that shortly seemed precious and important has lost its worth. It is dust and nothing. Paul decided to count all things and all the privileges of birth, education of righteousness according to the law for dung in order to acquire Christ. Plotinus says that the soul discards and rejects all that she valued before in order to acquire That which transcends all and which alone imports." We have nothing and we possess all", writes Paul to the Corinthians." I have lost the flock that I guarded before," says the soul in the mystical poem of John of the Cross ("Y el ganado perdi que antes segaia").

There is a new life, a "newness of life" kindled in man, but a *living* life, a free and creative process on the lines of *personality*, not a mechanical repulsion. That brings us to the other side of mystical experience: the response of man to the initiative of God.

Knocking at the door of the heart is not sufficient, knocking does not help, if—to emphasize it once more—the heart does not open its door. And when it is opened, the Lord enters and takes abode in the heart. This is the deepest significance of the Eucharistic Christian experience and of the mystical life in general. His entering my heart and reigning therein is the highest goal of the new life. The soul must therefore prepare itself thereto, it must see its own unworthiness and nakedness, it must humble itself, it must try to clean itself and surrender itself to the Lord. “I have surrendered all the keys of my house (gli chiavi dalla mia casa) to Divine Love”, says Catherine of Genoa. In meekness and humility I surrender through a manly, courageous struggle with my old self. That is the meaning of Christian co-crucifixion with the Lord. Only in manfully sharing His self-surrender, obedience unto death and suffering can I come to share His Life.

Self-surrender of our will to God is the highest achievement on the way leading us from Man to God. We find this expressed in many utterances of great mystics, representing the *theistic* religious experience, i.e. the encounter of two living personalities: the Divine and the human. We find such utterances also outside of Christianity — in the mystical confessions of some medieval theistic mystics of India or among the Sufis with their blending of two strains—the theistic and the pantheistic.

Bayezid Bestami, the great Sufi of the IXth century, hears the voice of God speaking to his soul in the night; “What does thou desire, Bayezid?—That, which Thou desireth, o my God!—O Bayezid, I desire thee, as thou desireth Me.—But what way leads to Thee?—O Bayezid, the man that renounces himself, he comes to Me”. And Bayezid, feeling himself aflame with boundless love, exclaims, “O, my God, I desire from Thee only Thee. Take away from my heart all that is not Thee”¹

And now to quote some of the Indian saints and mystics: “Dispose according to Thy will with me, Thy slave, Thy property. For Tulasi belongs to Thee alone. I am only a sacrificial gift, thrown under Thy feet”, says Tulasi-Dasa (a poet of the 16th century²) in a hymn. “Whatsoever I am in soul and body and whatsoever qualities I own”, exclaims another poem and mystic Yamuna-Muni, “all this I gather in one heap and throw at Thy feet, O Lord. All that is mine and what I am myself, must belong to Thee”³) “Thy slave offers himself to Thee with a free heart” sings Nanak.⁴

The difference from the Christian experience consists in the fact that the surrendering of one’s will to God, the supreme act of obedience, the return of man to the unity with God is something unattainable for man by his own effort according to the Christian conviction. Man cannot achieve it, it has

been achieved once: in the supreme sacrifice of His will offered by the Only-Begotten Son to His Father. And we share in His sacrifice, we are uplifted by His offering. We are obedient *only* through His sacrifice, only through His obedience. For Christians and for Christian mysticism Christ is not only the supreme guide to God: He is God Himself, having come to us and dwelt among us and having really become Man and as Man having really offered His will and His life in sacrifice of obedience to His Heavenly Father, making us share His obedience, His suffering—His cross and *through* it, only *through* it, His Life Eternal. The Christian fact, the Christian Good Tidings is *mystical and historical reality*: here, in the Flesh, among us is the Fullness of the Godhead. Through Him and with Him, our Lord and our Brother, we return to union with God. “Abide in Me and I will abide in you.” “Not I love henceforth. Christ lives in *Me*.”

NOTES

¹ s. TEZKIREH-I-EVLIA Le memorial des saints, trad. par A. Pavet de Courteuille, Paris 1883, p. 127, 131, 132

² Quoted by Fr. Heiler in his book “Das Gebet” 1918 p. 250.

³ s.r. Otto VISHNU-NARAYANA Texte zur indischen Gottesmystik I (Juna Diederichs, 1917). p. 50.

⁴ Heiler, *ibid*.

REPORT ON OBERLIN

V. REV. ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN
REV. VLADIMIR BORICHEVSKY

To His Eminence, The Most Reverend Metropolitan Leonty
Your Eminence:

From the third to the ninth of September of 1957, we participated as delegates of the Russian Orthodox Church of North America in the *North American Study Conference on Faith and Order* in Oberlin, Ohio. The conference was called at the initiative of the national Council of Churches and the American Conference for the World Council of Churches. This was actually the first purely American attempt to discuss the questions of church unity and structure in the light of the religious situation and problems on this continent. There were 278 delegates from 37 denominations with 128 consultants. Each delegate was assigned to one of three divisions, with four sections in each division. The general theme of the Conference "*The Nature of Unity We Seek*" was discussed and considered in the following manner: from the *theological*, the *church-organization* and the *socio-cultural* points of view. The greater number of delegates and consultants were either of the clergy or professors of theology of the various faiths represented.

The following Orthodox Churches were represented at this Conference: the Greek (The Rt. Rev. Athenagoras, Bishop of Elaia, the Very Reverend Eusebius A. Stephanou, the Rt. Rev. Georges Florovsky, the Rev. John Poulos; and observers, and consultants: Metropolitan James of Melita, the official representative of the Ecumenical Patriarch at the World Council of Churches headquarters in Geneva, the Rev. Geranios of Cleveland, and Dr. George Peter Michaelides, Professor of Church History, graduate School of Theology, Oberlin College.), The Russian (Very Rev. Alexander Schmemmann, Professor of Church History and Liturgics at St. Vladimir's Orthodox Theological Seminary and the Rev. Vladimir Borichevsky, Pastor of St. Mary's [Pokrova] in Minneapolis), the Syrian, (The Reverend William Sutfin Schneirla), the Romanian, (the Rt. Rev. Bishop Valerian D. Trifa, the Very Rev. Florian Gladau, and the Rev. Vasile Hategan). The Orthodox delegates met every day and discussed the work of the section in which each had participated. At the conclusion of the Conference each section worked out the report it was to present to all the Churches and denominations represented at the Conference.

I. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

We consider it our duty to report to Your Eminence that in our evaluation the Conference at Oberlin manifested in a very positive way the religious life in America. At all times we sensed the profound sincerity of all the participants in the gathering, and their burning desire to see the Church united and true to the will of Christ. We were also convinced that their interest in the Orthodox Faith was sincere, as was their desire to know better the substance and life of the Orthodox Church. We can also add that throughout the course of the gathering we sensed the merciful presence of the Holy Spirit.

In giving an evaluation of the Oberlin Conference from the Orthodox point of view, it seems to us that it can be presented under three basic statements:

1. If, as we believe and think, the unity of the Church is nothing less than the unity of all Christians in the bosom of One, Holy, Orthodox Catholic and Apostolic Church, then we certainly cannot speak at this time of the approach of such a unity. The principles of the Reformation which deprived the greater part of Western Christendom of a divinely-instituted hierarchy, of an Apostolic Succession, and of the fulness of the sacramental life in communion with the Theotokos and the Saints, remain in power. These principles continue to raise an insuperable wall between the Orthodox Church and the Protestant Faiths, precluding unity in sacraments and church communion.

2. But if we were to compare the relationship between Orthodoxy and Protestantism which we endured even recently, with those which we experience in the ecumenical gatherings, we must admit that there are positive and profound changes.

Our attention is drawn, first of all, to the theological revival in Protestantism. The Protestants are in the process of reevaluation and of reappraisal of the fundamentals of their faith, of their past, and of their traditions. The sources of this reappraisal are being sought in a revived study of the Holy Scripture, of the history of the Church and her liturgical traditions. During the plenary sessions a distinct call was made for such a reevaluation, and at the same time a call was made for a serious consideration of the meaning of Tradition and Liturgy in the life of the Church. If we take to account the fact that at least half of the participants of the Conference were from the so-called Free Churches, in which the liturgical life is relatively unimportant, then the agreed acceptance of the Eucharist, for example, as the "central action" of the Church points to the unmistakable return of at least a portion of the Protestants "from a strange land". The same can be said of the new and more profound interest in ecclesiology, in the question of Tradition, in the episcopacy and in other subjects. This can only serve to give hope to the Orthodox participants of such gatherings of a continuing of the widening and deepening of these interests.

3. Finally, besides the official declarations and decisions, we observed a lively interest on the part of many participants of the Conference in Orthodoxy. There is a readiness to consider the Orthodox Faith, and the Orthodox point of view *in all seriousness*, endeavoring to understand Her in Her essence. When *questions* are referred to the Orthodox, we sense that if there indeed is an unwillingness to accept the answer, there is nevertheless a serious effort made to think through the answer.

II. CONCERNING THE PARTICIPATION OF ORTHODOX IN THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

In view of all that has been written above in reference to the Conference in Oberlin, we consider it our duty to pose once again the general question concerning the participation of the Orthodox Church in the Ecumenical Movement.

It is generally known, that although this participation has a history of forty years (the participation of the Orthodox in the Stockholm Conference on "Life and Service" in 1925) and it can be considered official (one of the Presidents of the World Council of Churches is traditionally an Orthodox hierarch), there is on the other hand the fact that the *nature* and *purpose* of this participation remains to this day a subject of doubts and heated controversy, and can to no degree be considered fully explicated and formulated. All the Orthodox, even those with a limited experience as participants in interconfessional gatherings, know that this participation is intricately tied up with profound spiritual problems.

It seems to us that the basis of these difficulties is to be found in the very structure of the Ecumenical Movement, which does not permit the Orthodox Church to occupy in it Her proper place, and even deprives the Orthodox delegates of a fuller and more fruitful participation.

In the present structure of the World Council of Churches, the National Council of Churches etc., the Orthodox Churches which participate in this work are considered and assumed to be separate "churches", and Orthodoxy is considered as one of the "denominations". Thus it is that numerically the Orthodox find themselves to be an insignificant minority, and theologically they are but a sort of "far-right" sector of the denominational ensemble. It is true that a fundamental principle of the World Council of Churches (the so-called Toronto Statement of 1949) recognizes the right of the Orthodox Church to confess that She is the One, True and Undivided Church, that is, that no form of ecclesiastical relativism is acceptable. Thus, theoretically, the basic difficulty of our participation seems to have been lifted: not only is it desirable, but we are called to witness Orthodoxy in Her fulness and absoluteness. But in fact, this is not the case. In this scheme a fundamental fact is not

taken into consideration, namely, that "ecclesiological absolutism" (i.e., the confession of the Orthodox Church that She is the One, True Church) does not in the least exhaust the *uniqueness* and the *exclusiveness* of the Orthodox position in the Ecumenical Movement. Apart from a fuller and more integrated understanding of the relationship between the Orthodox Church and the non-Orthodox confessions, this ecclesiological absolutism cannot be rightly understood and may become a stumbling block and a temptation.

It must be admitted—and this is not done sufficiently that one of the *constituent elements*, and in this sense, a deciding factor in the Ecumenical Movement is precisely the encounter of the Christian confessions of the West with the Orthodox Church. This encounter differs in a most profound way from those new ecumenical relations which have arisen among various Western Churches for the past fifty years. Wherein lies the difference? No matter what confessional barriers have divided one western church and denomination from another, they are nevertheless members of the one and same spiritual family and one religious tradition. Their common roots can be traced not only to the Reformation of the 16th century, but also to the pre-Reformation Church of the West. They have the same categories of thought and faith, a common language and a fundamental agreement at least in the matter in which the questions under discussion are posed. It is also obvious that historically and theologically, Eastern Orthodoxy is, first of all, different in *tradition of faith and thought*. Thus, in relation to the Christian West, it appears to be *another spiritual world*. The differences are not only in distinct dogmatic premises and theses, but prior to this, in the basic categories of theological thought and in the manner of approaching the same question. Historically and theologically, Orthodoxy stands as a "whole" opposing another "whole" either the Protestant West, or Roman Catholicism. And if this is so, then the encounter of these two worlds or two traditions, or two "wholes" is an indispensable ingredient in an analysis of the ecumenical movement; without it there would be a pan-Protestant or a *western* movement, not so much in a geographic sense, as in the spiritual-theological connotations of this word. Existentially this means, that Orthodox participants of this or any other ecumenical conference, regardless of their number do not represent that empirical "jurisdiction" of which they are representatives, but rather Orthodoxy as a "whole" for Orthodoxy knows no other representation in the deepest sense of that word. Furthermore, this means that the Orthodox regardless of their numbers, represent not one of the "denominations", but *one of two* essential halves of the Ecumenical Movement. In this sense, their unique status is not a privilege, but an objective necessity for fruitful work. The history of the ecumenical encounter shows that despite the valuable contribution of one or another Orthodox theologian in a given area of ecumenical work, the Orthodox invariably find themselves in the whole ecumenical study and work

placed of necessity in the position of discussing questions formulated in "western" categories, and the products of specific western situations. This is neither the result of ill-will of the non-Orthodox, nor is it the result of neglect of the Orthodox. For in the West these are natural, and so to speak obvious categories. Nevertheless in these categories—and herein is the crux of the matter—the Orthodox answer, the Orthodox witness "does not ring a bell". The formal approach which is employed by many of the individuals in the Ecumenical organization who are studying the Orthodox Church is theoretically justified. But practically it too often makes Orthodox participation unproductive. Slowly but surely it strengthens among the Orthodox their doubts concerning the desirability of Orthodox participation in general.

We willingly admit that all that is written above calls for a radical review by the leaders of the Ecumenical Movement of its total structure. Nevertheless, we are convinced that without such a review the participation of the Orthodox in ecumenical work will continue to be limited, ambiguous, and not of full value.

III. OF THE UNPREPAREDNESS OF THE ORTHODOX FOR THE ECUMENICAL CONFERENCES

All that has been written above places in very sharp focus the problem of the *organization* of Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement. We must admit that this participation is sporadic, unprepared and unorganized. With the exception of a very few long-time participants in various ecumenical organizations, the Orthodox are very poorly informed of the history, structure, literature, and current developments of the Ecumenical Movement. This unpreparedness is further intensified by the complete lack of *joint* discussion of all the problems related to ecumenicity by the representatives of the various Orthodox churches. We come to the conferences not only unprepared, but even *disunited*. We believe most fervently in the call of the Orthodox to witness their faith. But this witness requires of us seriousness, and preparation. Therefore, we respectfully present for the consideration of Your Eminence, the following recommendations:

1. The creation at least within the borders of North America, of a *special Orthodox Commission*, with the express task of study of all the material related to the Ecumenical Movement, for evaluation and for regular report to all Orthodox churches.
2. The periodic publication of observations on the current developments within the Ecumenical Movement.
3. Preparation for Orthodox participation in gatherings by the publication of adequate theological literature.

In conclusion we must say a few words concerning the general spirit of Orthodox participation in the Ecumenical Movement. We have written above about the affirmation of the Orthodox Church as the One True Church of Christ. We must continue to confess this truth. But we cannot agree with those who state that the Orthodox in their encounter with the non-Orthodox are called only to "declare" and teach. In these encounters there is opportunity given for a general and humble teaching of one another. Orthodoxy has something to learn from their Western brethren in the words of the Apostle, "test everything; hold fast what is good", (I Thess. V, 21). The spirit of Orthodoxy is also the spirit of humility, of love and of joy in all that is true and positive. Loyalty to the Truth, which is treasured by the Holy Orthodox Church, must be united with the confession of the unworthiness, of us her servants, and with our love for all who are united with us in confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, as God, Lord, and Savior.

FATHER ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN
FATHER VLADIMIR BORICHEVSKY

September 1957.

The Church and Its Youth

Second Conference called by the Orthodox Christian Education Commission
Cleveland, Ohio, November 1-2, 1957

REV. VASILE HATEGAN

The future of the Church is its youth of today. To be assured of an enlightened and dedicated leadership tomorrow, the Church must give its youth the proper religious education and training. This is one of the most imperative problems of all the branches of the Orthodox Church in America. Each branch of the Church is trying to cope as best it can with its own particular problems. In the field of religious education, where most of the problems are common to all the branches, a unified effort would be the best way to solve them.

Many of our present leaders who are concerned with the future of the Church in America, are asking themselves what are these problems specifically and how do we go about solving them. Therefore, the Orthodox Christian Education Commission was set up with the consent of the participating jurisdictions of the Orthodox Church in America to act on their behalf as an advisory and study group. It is thus that some of the outstanding authorities on Christian education and Youth have been able to sit down, study the problems which confront us, present their findings and make certain recommendations for what they are worth to their respective hierarchs who take it from there.

On October 27 and 28, 1956, the Commission held its first National Conference at the Reed Farm in Valley Cottage, New York. A survey of Orthodox Christian Education in America was made by Father Schmemmann and the following topics were discussed: The Bible in Orthodox Christian Education by Father William Schneirla; the place of Liturgics in Christian Education led by Father Schmemmann; Christian Ethics in Education led by Professor S. Verkhovsky and Christian Education and the Religious Growth of the Child led by Mrs. Sophie Koulomzin. A most excellent report of the proceedings was published in the Commission's Bulletin.

The Executive Committee felt that the problem of the Orthodox Youth (i.e., the 16-20 age group) should be studied, being very pertinent to Religious Education and the future of the Church in this country. Therefore it was decided to make the theme of the second annual Conference: *The Church and Its Youth*.

This conference was held at St. Michael's Russian Orthodox Church in Cleveland, Ohio on November 1 and 2, 1957. More than 35 delegates representing 8 national jurisdictions and several youth organizations took part in the conference and a number of guests (Sunday School teachers and other interested laymen from local parishes) attended some of the meetings. After in-

troductioin of all the delegates, Mrs. S. Koulomzin, Secretary of the Commission and instructor of Christian Education at St. Vladimir's Seminary presented a brief outline of the Work of the Commission.

The first paper—"The Message of the Church to Youth" was read by Veselin Kesich, Assistant Professor of New Testament and Greek at St. Vladimir's Seminary. Prof. Kesich pointed out several characteristics of Church life essential for modern youth:

1) Search of tradition. The Church knows itself through tradition, which is the holy memory of the Church. To know ourselves individually, we must keep track of our development, we must remember what happened to us, what we were ten years ago. Individually a man knows he was different, yet he also knows that he is the same person. Just as there can be no well balanced sanity without memory, there can be no Church life without a living tradition. Our Orthodox learning is poor. Many believe that the Church has little intellectual life and it comes as a surprise to discover the wealth of the spiritual resources of the Church. Also there are few people who know how to share and how to communicate Church knowledge. We all know that our faith is based on the Holy Scriptures and Holy Tradition, we boast of our glorious tradition, but we do not know it. The primary task for the young generation is to search for the contents of tradition. But tradition must also be discovered in terms of reference to modern life.

2) Another point at which the Church has a special message for modern youth is in connection with the moral emptiness from which the latter suffers: "you can do whatever you feel like doing, if it does not land you in trouble". There is a divorce between Faith and Ethics. It is not enough to be interested in matters of faith, to study the precepts of faith. Faith and moral demands go together. Faith is not faith unless it affects the whole of our life.

3) Faith in what? Always in Jesus Christ. Christianity is a relation of persons to a Person. The substance of Christianity is neither a theological system, nor a moral code but the Person of Christ. To be a member of the Church, to be a Christian is not to believe in a proposition but in a Person. "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life". The Way is the Person, we are asked to be followers and not admirers and hearers. The Truth is the Person. Pilate's question was wrongly put, it should have been "Who is the Truth?" The Life has to be lived from the center which is with Him, it is only in Christianity that the words are used "to be in Christ". One does not say, "to be in Plato", "to be in Socrates". The message of the Church is not easy and must not be "tamed" or explained away. The Person and the personal element are the root of the matter. Sacredness of personal dealings and seriousness in them follow from our response to His call. Christ makes not only new relations among men, but also between things.

The discussion after Prof. Kesich's paper centered mainly on the problem

of how to stimulate the wish to learn, the desire to know. An opinion was expressed that youth would be interested in a Christian interpretation of life, of vital living problems, not only of the outer fringes and visible signs of Orthodoxy. The need for libraries was pointed out. The mere fact of books on Christian life and on the Church being easily available in parish libraries would stimulate the desire for knowledge.

The second paper on the "Portrait of Modern Youth" was presented by John Rexine, Professor in Classics at Colgate University.

Youth is naturally a curious period in any human being's life. The young person seeks to know more about the environment in which he finds himself, about the people and institutions to whom he looks as a source of authority. Youth seeks to find answers to the questions that plague him, many times the young person finds himself victim of other generations' mistakes which he would seek to understand and if possible to rectify. Sometimes this leads to rebellion.

The young person looks to the future, just as he is often looked upon by the older generation as the "future". In a sense, the period of youth may be described as idealistic; it is the period of hopes and aspirations as yet unrealized.

American youth has felt the impact of non theistic or atheistic materialism. The conveniences and discoveries of modern science have often led men to ignore or consider as of secondary importance, his spiritual needs. Youth is not impressed by principles expressed in words and not embodied in the living example of a spiritually productive life.

Many young people of the Orthodox faith feel "inferior" as a religious group, though they may not show it openly. In fact, this sentiment originates with the older generation and this unfortunate sense of insecurity is easily betrayed and passed on to youth.

American Orthodox youth finds itself in a culture which is basically Western European and Protestant. Young people naturally try to identify or equate or reconcile certain of their beliefs with those of the society in which they live. Yet they often find that they do not know the most basic facts about their own religion. Many times he is faced with a situation in which he finds himself the defendant instead of the champion of his cause. The American Orthodox youth recognizes his plight, recognizes that he knows less about the Orthodox culture of which he is a spiritual heir than about Western culture of which he is an adopted son.

Most Orthodox youths desire to stay within the Orthodox fold, but too many are Orthodox in name only. The problem is essentially a problem in proper Orthodox Christian education. The faith is there but it needs to be guided along the proper paths.

American materialism has had its effect on the Orthodox Church in this country. Church zeal is expressed in terms of large sums spent for buildings

that bear little resemblance to a House of Worship. There are few priests whose missionary zeal exceeds the desire for personal comfort and many Orthodox youth feel that some clergy come dangerously close to considering their office "a worldly business".

American Orthodox youth seeks to find the living example of truly spiritual Orthodox clergy and laymen in action, not giving lessons in rhetoric, the age of rhetoric has passed, modern American youth lives in an age of action and demands action. The age of youth is often called the age of "indiscretion", and the age of indiscretion needs leaders who are fervent champions of the Orthodox cause.

American Orthodox youth is fully aware of its limitations with respect to its knowledge about the Orthodox religion, but it is fully aware that Orthodoxy is a universal Christian religion whose mission involves the crossing of all national and cultural barriers. This awareness of brotherhood with Eastern Orthodox Christians everywhere is highly encouraging.

Orthodox youth desires the spiritual security offered by the Church, but modern youth will not accept paternal sermons clothed in terms of hypocritical generalizations. Modern American youth wants to know, but they want to know facts, they want a Christian education illustrated by a living example. It is no longer enough for youth to be told to believe, but he must believe in the Orthodox Church because he believes in Christ and His Church.

John Rexine's paper provoked some animated discussions and considerable criticism. It was pointed out that the paper was not free of the very rhetoric that it condemned. Accusations of the older generation and clergy are an easy way out. The words "Youth wants action" are too general a statement. What action?

Prof. Kesich warned that the "Youth of action" is only half the truth. There must also be the "youth of contemplation". He also stressed that an Orthodox Christian was not at home in the civilization of the East, even though it is true that he is foreign to the civilization of the West. A Christian will always experience an aloofness, a separateness from "The ways of the world".

In the course of the discussion, the question was asked what is the definition of an Orthodox Christian, since it was felt that external observances are not the essence. In an attempt to answer the question, Father Schmemmann stated that our tragedy is the double life most of us are leading, with Church attendance on Sundays, enjoyment of good choir, observance of certain traditions on one side and our professional, social, family and school absorbing interests on the other side. Belonging to the Church is determined by a sacrificial way of life, by an Orthodox Christian view of life that penetrates the whole of our life. An Orthodox Christian is a man who sincerely tries to overcome this duality of values and standards, who tries to solve all the problems of his life in an Orthodox Christian way.

This "double way of life" makes itself particularly felt in the following spheres:

General cultural life, with the frequent seeming contradiction of science and faith.

Professional—where is the limit between loyalty to one's profession and the loyalty to one's faith?

Recreation—the rhythm of modern life is "Work, work and relax!" We need a Christian elaboration of the philosophy of relaxation. What are Christian feasts? We cannot attempt to build our day of rest on the pattern of the Byzantine Sunday of the IVth century, but we must discover modern Orthodox patterns of holidays.

Man-woman relations.

The Very Rev. Alexander Schmemmann, professor at St. Vladimir's Theological Seminary read the third paper: "*Critical Evaluation of Existing Youth Work.*"

Father Schmemmann began his statement with an enumeration of contacts he had with youth movements in Europe as Vice President of the Youth Department of the World Council of Churches. In this country he came in touch with American youth through his work at St. Vladimir's and his numerous contacts with Orthodox youth organizations. The condition of Orthodox American youth must be studied in the perspective of the general characteristic of modern youth as described by many sociologists and educators. Three traits seem to be recognized as particularly characteristic of post-war youth: 1) conformism 2) search for security (which is the main source of conformism) and 3) pragmatism, i.e. "what counts are the practical results." There is little sense of adventure or sacrificial approach to life. The general characteristics have a strong impact on Orthodox youth, but certain other traits can be considered specifically characteristic of Orthodox young people.

The Orthodox church in America existed for almost one hundred years without "intelligentsia". It was founded mainly by immigrants who were farmers, and working men and this explains much in the psychology of present day younger generation, that have reached a higher strata of secular culture than their parents. This explains the lack of training in the tradition of Orthodox culture. Orthodoxy is identified with ritual, with forms of worship, with national background. The new generation has to find its own way of Orthodox life, its new pattern.

The 16-25 generation can be roughly divided into two groups:

1) The unorganized Orthodox by baptism, who upon marrying will bring their child to be baptized in an Orthodox Church and will not return there until that child's wedding day.

2) The organized Orthodox youth which keeps up a contact with the Church.

We must frankly admit that nothing is being done for the vast numbers of the unorganized Orthodox youth. The dynamic energy of the Church during the past decades, aware of the tragedy of the "lost generation" was directed into the creation of the Sunday School system. Started as an emergency measure "to save children for our Church" it met with a measure of success, whatever the defects of its lack of preparatory thought and constructive planning. The only exceptions in the general picture are the chaplaincy service in the army and the very recent attempts to contact Orthodox students on college and university campuses. Though extremely rewarding in themselves, these services are infinitely small in comparison with the need.

The organized Orthodox youth is to be found in the large national youth organizations like the GOYA, AROY, FROC, SOYA, Ukr. Orth. League and others. It is this part of the Orthodox youth that we can attempt to evaluate today.

In a church that lacks organization, we must admit that this is the only well organized group. They have a tremendous contribution to bring to Orthodox culture. A good example is the Orthodox Journal published by the FROC with a very high percent of lay authors contributing its articles on Orthodox Faith and life. Approximately 70% of theological students—the future priests of our church come from the ranks of the youth organizations and any worthwhile Church project undertakes their hearty and generous financial support.

Other characteristics of the American Orthodox youth movements are less promising. In comparison with similar groups in Europe, there seems to be a lack of intellectual interests, no concentration on problems, or doubts, no "tormenting questions".

A good democratic apparatus has been created for the running of these organizations, but there is little leadership that can challenge the large body of members with ideas. To reflect the will of the majority may be a sound principle in politics, but it is not enough for religion.

There is a certain spirit of opposition to the Church as an organization. This concerns such problems as the use of English in Church services, the "Americanization" of the Orthodox way of life, etc. Youth organizations would have a great contribution to the Church in this field if they could start workshops and study the problems involved. If they want their ideas to triumph, they must try to work out challenging experiences and projects. We must admit that we shall not do any better by merely replacing the older generation by the younger one.

Another characteristic is what I would call a "closed psychology", a tendency to consider themselves as an end in themselves. A course of lectures in a parish, for example, will only be attended if run under the auspices of the youth organization.

The last trait I have to mention is a kind of pragmatism, with efficiency the only standard of excellence. An activity is considered worthwhile if it draws large numbers of attendants, and no interest will be displayed for a small group of 4 or 5 though what they are doing may have a much greater value. Large figures are given too much importance, we must believe in small numbers, in small groups, sanctified by the example of the chosen twelve. What matters are ideals and not numbers, and an organization must live by ideals, not by numbers.

I would like to include in my statement, some practical suggestions for the future.

As far as the vast unorganized mass of Orthodox youth is concerned, we must recognize that our lack of action is a real sin on our conscience. We need a missionary effort in the colleges and high schools, we need a budget, we need a survey. We cannot afford to wait for customers. We must produce appropriate literature, we must have priests, missionaries, we must train leaders for discussion groups. Our organized groups should develop a missionary zeal to bring people, not necessarily into their organization, but to the Church.

The greatest need of the youth organizations is an adequate program in religious education, it should be on a high level, relevant to life problems and adequate spiritually and intellectually. Challenging questions should be asked, no ready answers given before the questions are asked. All the real problems of today—sex, art, movies and literature must be treated. The real question is how can we be Orthodox today, what does it mean to be Orthodox? Does it only mean to eat fish on Fridays and attend the Divine Liturgy on Sundays? We want to lead our young people to ask questions and to find answers, and within youth organizations, it should be the task of the Religious Education Departments.

We must unite our efforts, unless we want to lose more souls. We cannot prevail as just Russians, or just Greeks. There is need for re-thinking all along the line on the part of those forces that must become the missionary power of the Church.

The last paper, "What Are Our Greatest Needs for Immediate Future" was presented by the *Rt. Rev. Valerian, Bishop of the Romanian Church in U.S.A.*

It is all a matter of education, said the Bishop, but there is no independent educational solution. First, the problems of the Church must be solved. The biggest asset for a successful educational program is a well-organized Church with foresight and conscious of its mission. We must reappraise our whole Orthodox attitude in the light of scientific, sociological, economic and cultural attitudes in this country. We should recognize that many forces shape our young people's minds. The Orthodox Church should stop living in the accomplishments of the past and try to live by its present deeds. The Orthodox churches to a large extent are provincial in nature in this country, even though

they are situated in very urban environments. We are living in a militant world and only a militant church with an aggressive leadership can expect to survive. The complexity of American life raises many questions in the minds of our youth, which they expect the Church to answer. The Orthodox Church should meet the needs of the young generation and avoid setting itself apart from the daily problems. In approaching the modern American youth, it should be kept in mind that our technological age and newly discovered automation are deeply influencing youth. The Church must give its youth a spiritual world vision.

To find solutions to these problems, we have the following assets at our disposal: the apostolic foundation of the Church, the richness of our Tradition, the Holy Sacraments, our historical adaptability, our democratic outlook and the millions of communicants. Orthodoxy will be successful in America if we are able to create the following institutions and cooperate with them:

An American Conference of Bishops to find solutions to problems all jurisdictions have in common. We should have an American Orthodox Missionary Diocese to reach the unchurched and the unorganized youth, especially in communities where there are no Orthodox churches, in the colleges, armed forces, etc.

One of the important needs of the future is the training of an American-born clergy for which we need an Inter-Orthodox Theological Institution, without barriers of language and jurisdictional matters. There is nothing more helpful for religious education than to have monasteries dedicated to prayer and special spiritual works. To reach all our youth through the media of the printed word, we need an Orthodox Publishing House, to publish a whole Orthodox library. We must enlarge upon our Pan-Orthodox associations and programs, which young people can understand. These are just dreams, but there is no solution or progress without dreams preceding them. It is a long-range solution, but the only sensible and feasible one.

The delegates and official observers to the Conference contributed to the lively discussions on each subject, and there is no doubt that when the full proceedings are published,* they will form the basis of serious study, which will eventually lead to action on the part of the responsible hierarchs to find satisfactory solutions for the glory of God and the future of the Orthodox Church in America.

* To be published as the W3 of the Bulletin of Commission. For inquiries concerning the work of the Commission and the Bulletin write to *Mrs. S. Koulomzin*, 38 Glen Byron Ave., Nyack, N.Y.

Some Remarks on Pastoral Theology

REV. ALEXANDER SCHMEMANN

These remarks were inspired by the reading of a new manual of Pastoral Theology written by Father Cyprian Kern, Professor at St. Sergius Theological Academy in Paris.¹ One should not conceal the fact, and Fr. Cyprian plainly states it, that our Orthodox literature in Pastoral Theology is poor, and even in its best achievements outdated or inadequate to our present situation. For it is the particularity of this theological discipline that it must relate the permanent, the unchanging doctrine of the pastoral ministry (its "essence") to a concrete situation (the "existence"), describing the ways and means of this ministry in a particular society and culture. The old manuals were written in Orthodox countries, for an "organically" Orthodox society, where the position of the priest was quite different from the one he occupies in our pluralistic and secularized world. One may regret the passing of the "good old times" but it is impossible to bring them back to life. Pastorologists in the West—both Roman Catholic and Protestant—have long ago begun a radical rethinking of pastoral work in the modern world;² we Orthodox are late in this as in many other spheres of Church life. The situation is especially critical in America. Nowhere is the word "adjustment" used more often, yet few seem to realize that adjustment implies, first of all, a serious spiritual and intellectual effort to rethink, to re-evaluate, the existing situation in the light of the fundamental principles of Orthodoxy. The Orthodox are either blindly "conservative" or enthusiastically "progressive"; in the first case, the Orthodox Church gets out of touch with the real world, remains the religion of the "old-timers": in the second it too often simply ceases to be Orthodox. To face this dilemma, we must purify our vision of the Church — of her eternal nature, but also of her eternal actuality, her relevance to all situations. And we must remember that in Orthodoxy one can never *progress* without a *return* to the sources of faith, to the foundations of Church life.

From this point of view, Fr. Cyprian's book undoubtedly marks a progress. In it, the whole idea of the pastoral ministry is deepened, brought back to its real sources—the sacramental life of the Church, especially the Eucharist, the Fathers and the genuine spiritual tradition of Orthodoxy, and at the same time a connection is established between this ideal and its application in the actual conditions of our existence. Of special value are the chapters in which the author deals with the pastoral "calling", the preparation for priesthood, the ordination and the various pastoral "temptations". One can but hope that these chapters, although written with the European scene in view, will be translated into English and be made available to our Seminarians here. For

more than anything else, we need such an inspiring description of the priest, whose whole life is rooted in the Sacrament yet who is dedicated entirely to men and their salvation.

But there still remains a general question concerning the very idea of Pastoral Theology and its method. Fr. Cyprian Kern has used, to the best of his possibilities, the traditional scheme, in which Pastoral Theology is focused exclusively on two subjects — the personal life of the priest and the “Seelsorge”, the care of souls. The question is, does this scheme exhaust all the dimensions, all the tasks of Pastoral Theology?

It seems to me that this traditional scheme lacks a more explicit description and interpretation of the pastoral ministry in terms of the Church, i.e., the ecclesiological aspect of Pastoral Theology. To be sure this discipline deals primarily with the pastor, but can the pastor be “isolated” from the priest and the teacher, can he be defined in any categories other than those of the Church? The traditional Pastoral Theology reflects a situation where the various aspects of the ministry are not integrated in a common perspective, which is precisely an ecclesiological perspective. The priest is first of all the *minister of the Church*, and his ministry must be defined as the edification of the Church. His three functions: the priestly, the teaching and the pastoral, are not three independent spheres of activity, but are ultimately rooted in one and the same reality: that of the Church, the Body of Christ, the new life, granted in Christ, and they all have one common goal: the growth of the Church into the fulness of Christ’s stature. One cannot define one without referring it to the other two, and all three of them to the Church. In Orthodox ecclesiology, one is pastor because one is priest and teacher, and one is priest and teacher because one is pastor, and all these functions are one and the same, to be fulfilled in the Church, by the Church and for the Church.

Because it has neglected its ecclesiological foundation, traditional Pastoral Theology has limited its field to the “care of souls”, i.e. to the relationship between the Pastor and the individual Christian. It is as if the „priest“ were to deal with the “social” and the “public” whereas the „Pastor“ had to concentrate all his attention on the “personal” and the “individual”. This results in a very real distortion of both the priestly and the pastoral aspects of the modern Orthodox ministry.

For the very idea of the Pastor (the shepherd) necessarily includes both the flock (the totality, the unity of many) and the individual. The shepherd leaves ninety nine sheep to find the one which is lost, but it is in order to bring it back to the flock, to integrate it into the unity outside of which it cannot survive. This means that in the Orthodox understanding, both the Church — the Body—and the individual member of the body are objects of care for the Pastor, and that these two aspects belong to one another in such a way that neither can be properly fulfilled without the other.

1) The priest is first of all, the Pastor of the Church. This means that his priestly office has a pastoral dimension, that the celebration of the liturgy and the sacraments, the proclamation of the Word of God and the teaching of Tradition are means of edifying the Church, of constantly guiding the flock towards the fuller realization of the Church's nature and goals. Thus the Eucharist is the sacrament of unity; Baptism and Confirmation, the sacraments of entrance into the Church; the Holy Matrimony that of integration into the Church of a Christian family. And teaching is not merely the proclamation of Christian principles but the constant appeal to "build up" the Church, to realize it as unity, as a body inspired with the same faith, the same vision, the same ultimate task. . . All this is "pastoral" in the deepest sense of the word, and a priest who would neglect these pastoral implications of his priestly office would become a priest in the pagan significance of the term: a man fulfilling sacred actions and considered as an end in himself. This is why one would like to see the pastoral aspect of the sacramental duties of the priest given more importance in manuals of Pastoral Theology. For the one standing before the Altar every Sunday and offering the spiritual sacrifices does so because on the day of his ordination the Body of Christ, i.e., the Church of God, was entrusted to him, and it is on the measure of care that he has given this body that he will be judged on the awful judgement day of the Lord. (Cf. rite of ordination). But this is not all. There is another aspect of the pastoral ministry almost entirely ignored in the manuals of Pastoral Theology. The parish to which the priest is assigned as pastor is not an isolated, self-centered and self-sufficient unit, or rather it should not be such a unit. And it is precisely the sacred duty of the priest, as the minister of the Church, to prevent this process of isolation. In the parish he must be the representative, the voice and the witness of the Church, constantly "transforming" the parish into the Church. Here two vital principles must be brought back to life by means of Pastoral Theology. One is the relation of the priest to his bishop, i.e. to the diocese, which is the real "unit" and expression of the Church; the other — his relation to the other priests, to the "presbyterium" of the Church.

By the very structure of the Church, the priest in his parish represents the Bishop, without whom "nothing ought to be done in the Church" (St. Ignatius of Antioch). In our present situation this sounds like a completely abstract truth. Always proclaiming our belief in the episcopacy of the "conditio sine qua non" of true Orthodoxy, in our life we are dangerously close to the presbyterian pattern of Church life. After the day of his ordination and his assignment to a parish, the priest does not feel any real need of the Bishop, unless it be for a "solemn affair"—an anniversary, a banquet, a dedication. There are parishes that have lived for fifteen years without an episcopal visitation. And there are priests who protest against the multiplication of dioceses and bishops, arguing that one Metropolitan is all we need for a Church of three hundred parishes.

But how, in these conditions, will the Orthodox people believe in the necessity of the Bishop for the Church life; how will we stop the growth of "independent" parishes; how in short, will we convince the congregation that besides and beyond the "parish" there is the Church, on which the parish depends for all its life? To represent the Bishop means much more for the priest than to ask his permission for everything he does, or to report to him on his activities. It means, above all, a certain vision of his own office: the priest must not identify himself completely with the parish and its "interests" but, on the contrary, must be a permanent reminder in the parish that the life of the congregation is not self centred, but is an ever fuller actualization of all the dimensions of the Church: its missionary activity, its communion with other Churches, its participation in the works of mercy, education and help which of necessity transgress the boundaries of the parish. The parish belongs to the Diocese, and through the priest it has to take full part in the life of the Diocese, just as through the Bishop the Diocese participates in the life of the Church universal. All this calls for a deep rethinking of the Bishop-priest relationship in our church, and therefore the reintegration of the Bishop into the description of the pastoral ministry.

The priest is also a member of the *presbyterium*, of the collective priesthood of the Church. All early orders of ordination stress this "pluralistic" nature of the "second order" in the Church, yet our Pastoral Theology is silent on this important aspect of the priest's functions. But how many pastoral tragedies, how many conflicts and failures, could have been avoided in our Church if only we could realize that beyond their personal responsibilities the priests, with their bishops, have a common responsibility for the Church. They are called to constitute the "presbyterium". They need it for mutual advice, help, edification and guidance. They need it because this "sobornost" belongs to the very nature of our Church and, specifically, to the "charisma" of their office. And this is why we need a reconsideration of the possible forms and of the very content of this "presbyterium" in the Pastoral Theology.

2) The priest is also the pastor of each individual member of his flock, his father in Christ. For him each human soul is priceless, for Christ has died for it. This "Seelsorge", the care of souls, is given much emphasis in Pastoral Theology but here also an obvious defect distorts its fuller meaning. It limits the sphere of this care almost exclusively to the Sacrament of Penance, i.e. to confession, as if sin were the only object of pastoral activity. But the parish is not made up of potential "penitents" only; it consists of men whose whole life has to be shaped and inspired by the Church, who have to be "edified" as members of the Body, constantly integrated into the spiritual reality of the new life in Christ. The priest must be present in the life of his spiritual children, and he must bring not only the judgement but also the joy of Christ's presence, His truth and love, into their life. Today there is an alienation of the priest

from the real life of his parishioners, for whom he is either the man of baptisms, weddings and funerals, or a sort of civic leader, to be judged by his efficiency in handling the material interests of the parish. . . We must restore not only his right but also his duty to be the adviser, the guide, the teacher, the judge in all situations, and in all situations to be the representative of the Church — of her eternal Truth, her commandments and doctrines. Confession is but the climax of his pastoral care as a whole — the bringing back of the one lost sheep to the flock.

These remarks are simply indications of very complicated problems, the solution of which will not be easy. Yet Pastoral Theology must take them into consideration and try to solve them if it is to perform its real task, that of preparing men for the highest of all possible vocations on earth.

¹ Archimandrite Cyprian Kern, *The Orthodox Pastoral Ministry*, Paris, 1957, 256 pp. (in Russian).

² Cf. essays by Roman Catholics: *Pretres d'Hier et d'Augourd'hui*, coll. "Unam Sanctam", 28, Paris, 1954; *Qu'attendez vous du Pretre?* Coll. "Presences", Paris, 1949; *Etudes sur le Sacrement de l'Ordre*, Coll. "Lex Orandi", 22, Paris, 1957. On the Protestant approach cf. R. Niebuhr *The Purpose of the Church and its Ministry*, New York, 1956 and my review of it in *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 1957, pp. 34-36.

Book Reviews

PHILOSOPHY

THE LAW OF CREATION, A STUDY IN THE PHILOSOPHICAL SYSTEM OF I. M. HOENE-WRONSKY, by Rev. Gennady, St. Tikhon Seminary Publ., 1956, 318 pp., \$5.00 (in Russian)

This monograph of the Very Rev. Gennady Eykalovich was presented as a Th.M. thesis at St. Sergius Institute in Paris. It is an important contribution to philosophical literature. It is important because Hoene-Wronsky was not only a remarkable philosopher, but also because he uses a particular terminology. In this respect, Fr. Gennady can rightfully be commended for having added an explanation of some of the terms at the end of his book.

Many ideas of Hoene-Wronsky are extremely valuable, his assertion, for example, that any negation of the "Absolute" leads necessarily to absolute scepticism (38, 82-27); a similar idea was recently expressed by S. L. Frank in his defense of the intuitionistic character of the ontological argument, (quoting Nicholas of Cues). Man, says Hoene-Wronsky, is both *created and non-created*. A Christian philosopher can agree with this statement, understood as a distinction in every person between substantial "ego", created by God and its empirical character, which each person develops by himself. Hoene-Wronsky's defense of teleology is valuable and especially noteworthy is his critical evaluation of empiricism (with its exclusive foundation in sensory experience) and of the philosophy empiricism produced (141-143; 152). His historiography is also of great value.

But one cannot accept the central idea of Hoene-Wronsky, the one which permeates his whole system. It is his affirmation that "the creative synthesis of being and knowledge is (constitutes) our own reality and the reality of the world" (52). For the great majority of metaphysicians, reality consists of many aspects, as to knowledge, it is the activity of the knowing subject, activity directed at the being in order to reflect upon its nature and properties. But for Hoene-Wronsky, being as such is not the reality. He proclaims that reality is the result of a union between being and knowledge. Consequently, the terms, "being" and "knowledge" acquire a particular meaning in his philosophy, different from the one usually given by philosophers. Indeed, for him, being is inarticulate and passive (72, 96, 98, 100). Such being is not the reality in which we live, which is articulate, active and capable of development. Reality therefore is produced or generated by knowledge when it "unites with being" (98). "The main product of knowledge is the *unity of relation in being*" (96). It is obvious that by "knowledge" Hoene-Wronsky means all the *relations* which transform the inarticulate being into the structural unity of the real world. In this structure, knowledge is the form, and the being is the content of this form, or the "matter" which it unifies. "One does not exist without the other"; being without knowledge "would be meaningless" "knowledge without being, having no point of application, would be empty" (95).

There is a remarkable similarity between this theory and the gnoseology of Kant, who was admired by Hoene-Wronsky, "This famous man", he wrote, "has the fame of one who even if he is not the founder of true philosophy made its progress possible" (60). The idea of a necessary relationship between knowledge as the form, and the being as the content, or matter of the objects, is expressed in almost identical words, in the "criticism of Pure Reason". According to Kant, the data of the "aposteriori experience" (impressions), are inarticulate. It is only through the "apriori" synthesis (i.e. the synthesis by

categories) performed by human reason, i.e. by man's cogitative faculty, that these "data" are organized in a system and produce objects, which compose nature. In the structure of these objects, knowledge is the form, and the data of the experience constitute matter. Kant expressed the essence of his theory in the following formula: the conditions that make knowledge possible are the conditions that make things possible. Knowledge, according to Kant, generates the system of things, but these things are mere phenomena, not the real thing or the "Ding an sich". Things are constructed from inarticulate "data" by reason, which merely adds these data to each other. Thus things are similar to mosaics; they are lifeless. This does not disturb a Kantian, to him it seems normal: things that we know are mere phenomena, they are not the "being" created by God — this "being" is completely inaccessible to our knowledge.

Hoene-Wronsky's essential difference from Kant is that for him, knowledge in its synthesis of a being, creates it as genuine and a living reality and not as a lifeless "phenomena". However, he accepts the idea of Kant which states that the contents of objects are inarticulate and that "they are constructed as objects" by the act of inner-relating their "data" to each other. He does not seem to understand that such "objects" must of necessity be mosaic-like and lifeless as the "phenomena" of Kant. Like Kant, when speaking of being, he meant only the passive *products* (such as color, sound, etc.) of active and living subjects, and not these subjects themselves. And following Kant in the latter's presupposition that the structural relations of things are conditions of their knowability, he together with Kant exaggerated the significance of knowledge: he imagined that the world was constructed as a "system" precisely through knowledge.

But the structural relations between objects of the world, just as knowledge itself, are conditioned by the spiritual foundations of the universe. However, these relations, excluding those made by God, are created by living beings and created without knowledge (for example, the relations of causality); the possibility of knowing the real being is the consequence of the structurality of the world and not its cause. For Kant is right when he states that the conditions of knowledge coincide with the conditions of things, but he is wrong in-as-much as this formula gives priority to knowledge, the source of hisgnoseological idealism or phenomenalism. In fact, the priority belongs to being, which because of its spiritual roots, creates its own activity as something "structural" permeated with relations even without knowledge, has been elaborated in my book *"The Universe as an Organic Whole"* (Cf. the English translation), and also in my *"Popular Introduction to Philosophy"*.

Kant exaggerated the meaning of knowledge and thus having logically come tognoseological idealism, rejected even the possibility of scientific Metaphysics. Hoene-Wronsky has also exaggerated the meaning of knowledge, yet, at the same time, he has made an attempt to free himself from the Kantian idealism and to elaborate a metaphysical theory of knowledge as the source of the structural aspect of the universal reality. But this attempt is inconsistent from the logical point of view. Therefore his philosophy includes many concepts, which having no foundation either in the sensory experience, or intellectual intuition (contemplation), are a product of his imagination. A work of art can be an act of phantasy in images, and it is good. But a philosophy which would not be established on intellectual intuition (i.e., the contemplations of the ideal foundations of the universe) is but a phantasy in concepts, and this is bad. From this point of view, the philosophy of Hoene-Wronsky is similar to that of Fichte Senior; to understand it is very difficult and one must be very patient when reading his books and searching for their meaning.

— NICHOLAS LOSSKY

CHURCH AND STATE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN

CHURCH AND STATE BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN: *prepared under the general editorship of Vladimir Gsovsky, 1955. Published for the Mid-European Studies Center of the Free Europe Committee by F. A. Praeger, New York.*

A study of the situation of the Church in the Communist States presents considerable difficulties not only because of the scarcity of information coming from behind the Iron Curtain, but also because of the obstacles that one encounters in obtaining the official acts and documents published in "people's democracies". We must also add that the languages of some of these countries (Hungarian, Romanian, etc.) are not among the best known in the Western World. One of the first attempts to gather such material was made in a book published in 1950 by J. B. Barron and H. W. Waddams at the request of the British Council of Churches (*Communism and Churches*). The book contained many basic and indispensable documents and facts concerning the Churches in U.S.S.R., Albania, Czechoslovakia, Romania and Yugoslavia (up to December 31, 1949) but in order "to avoid bias, the text (of the documents) was wholly devoid of comments". Although not completely exhaustive, an ideal which would be extremely difficult to reach in the first attempt, this valuable collection is still very useful in studying the situation prior to 1950. One must regret that some of the most important laws are not given in extenso, this makes it impossible to answer certain questions which are clearly and completely answered in the missing parts of the text. In addition to possible divergence concerning the "important" and the "unimportant" among the students of the contemporary Eastern Churches, a law cannot be fully evaluated and interpreted unless its full text is available.

No doubt many changes have occurred in the situation of the Churches since 1950. The book under review is a study of these developments, together with some additional information about the situation before 1950. It describes the actual position of the Church in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland, i.e., the situation that existed in the midst of 1954. An introductory article by V. Gsovsky, "Separation of Church and State" analyzes the basic principles of the Communist Party towards the Church, principles which shaped the situation in people's democracies. In the Preface, we are told that a second volume under preparation will deal with U.S.S.R., Bulgaria and Yugoslavia.

Working under the auspices of the "Mid European Law Project of the Library of Congress", the authors of the volume had access to exceptionally rich sources of material. The analysis of the situation in each country is usually preceded by a historical survey of regulations concerning the Church before World War II, then we have a detailed description of the changes that took place and of the legislative work of the Communist governments. The book not only deals with major Christian denominations; that is, Roman Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox, but gives data on minor sects (Uniates, Old Believers, Adventists, etc.) and on non-Christian religious bodies — the Jews and the Muslims. The full text of the most important laws, decrees and regulations is usually attached (in extenso) to the general description of the situation. The various declarations of officials, pastoral letters and excerpts from the official press are also given. We find a table of status at the end in which the nature and the date of each act is indexed and a complete bibliography of sources and literature is given. The only exception is the study of the situation in Romania, here the legislative texts are missing with no explanation for the deletion.

The fact that each section of the book has been worked out under the immediate direction and editorship of Dr. V. Gsovsky by natives of the country, with which the

section deals, is especially valuable. They not only have a good knowledge of the respective languages, but also of the conditions and particularities of their countries. The preface emphasizes that the views expressed in the reports on each country are those of the authors of each section. One does not necessarily agree with all their views but the book contains such a wealth of objective and authentic materials that it most certainly will serve as a foundation for all further scientific work in the study of the religious situation behind the Iron Curtain.

— ALEXANDER BOGOLEPOV

We have just been informed of the death of Professor VLADIMIR LOSSKY in Paris. The English translation of his book *"The Mystical Theology of the Eastern Church"* was reviewed for this issue by Professor Serge Verkhovsky. This review will be replaced in the next issue (Spring, 1958) by a special article devoted to the thought and writings of the late Professor Lossky.

Book Notes

BYZANTIUM, KIEV AND MOSCOW: A STUDY IN ECCLESIASTICAL RELATIONS, by Dimitri Obolensky. *An offprint from Dumbarton Oaks Papers, 11, Harvard University Press, 1957, pp. 23-78.*

Professor Obolensky has made a brilliant attempt to solve one of the most confused problems in the early history of the Russian Church: that of its canonical status within the jurisdiction of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople. The problem has been given a great variety of solutions: from the theory of a Bulgarian jurisdiction to that of a Roman origin of the Russian Church. But even if one accepts the classical theory of the subordination of the Russian Church to Byzantium, the question is open as to the real nature and forms of that subordination. Taking his starting point in a text of Nicephoras Gregoras (a text which he proves to have been accidentally omitted from the Bonn edition of Gregoras' "Roman History") Prof. Obolensky shows that, although the Russian Church was a metropolitanate within the Patriarchate of Constantinople, an "economical" compromise between the claims of the Greek Church and the nationalistic aspirations of the Russian consisted in an alternation of Russian and Greek metropolitans in Kiev. Prof. Obolensky's argumentation is very convincing and subject to its full elaboration, this theory seems to provide the most "logical" solution to a problem which so far has been a real "crux interpretum."

— A. SCHMEMANN

THE CANONICAL VIEW OF INTER-COMMUNION WITH THE HETERODOX, by Archimandrite Jeronimos I. Kotsonis. *Tithens, 1957, 232 pp.*

In this very well documented study, Father Kotsonis justifies the position taken by contemporary Orthodox theologian on the burning issue of "intercommunion". By a careful analysis of all available canonical data (especially valuable are those of the period after the fall of Constantinople), he comes to the conclusion that intercommunion in any form would be in open contradiction with the tradition and the norms of the Orthodox Church. As in his earlier book (*The Status of the Laity in the Church*, cf. *St. Vladimir's Seminary Quarterly*, January 1957, pp. 41-44), Father Katsonis concentrates all his attention on canonical evidence and therefore, does not discuss theologically the exact meaning of such terms as "validity" of the sacraments, limits of the Church, etc.,

terms which must ultimately be integrated in a full ecclesiology. But the exact knowledge and an evaluation of the canonical tradition is a necessary prerequisite for such an ecclesiology — and this makes Fr. Kotsonis' book valuable both theoretically (as a step in the forthcoming elaboration of an Orthodox doctrine of the Church) and practically (as a necessary "vademecum" for all those involved in the ecumenical work). And one must agree with Archbishop Michael, who in his review of this book (*Orthodox Observer*, November 1957, pp. 273-274) writes, "the work of Arch. Jeronimos Katsonis demonstrates . . . the necessity of convoking a Pan-Orthodox Synod, which is alone competent to define our relations with the heterodox up to the point to which it is possible to proceed without injury to Orthodoxy".

— A. SCHMEMANN

LES TRADUCTIONS RUSSES DES TEXTES PATRISTIQUES, GUIDE BIBLIOGRAPHIQUE, by R. P. Cyprien Kern. Editions de Chevelogne, 1957, 78 pp.

This "bibliographical guide" as Fr. Kern humbly entitles it, is in fact a first rate scholarly work and an outstanding contribution to patristic studies. For years and years, Fr. Kern has been patiently collecting the Russian translations of Fathers and anyone who opens his "guide" will be convinced that his research was not an easy one. Some of the translations were published in obscure periodicals or attached to forgotten monographs. Finding them implied the knowledge of the whole Russian theological literature. The result of this research is a unique "repertoire" which will be of great help not only to the student of the Fathers, but also to the historian of Russian theology and of Russian culture in general. It includes translations from Greek, Latin, Arabic, Syriac, Armenian, Georgian, Coptic and Ethiopian. It shows how close the Russian theology was to a revival of patristic studies when its development was interrupted by the 1917 Revolution and on what a solid scientific foundation it would have taken place. In his introduction, Fr. Kern gives a very excellent and detailed survey of the history of Patrology in Russia. The only regret one can express concerns the absence of an index, which should have made the use of the "guide" easier.

— A. SCHMEMANN

BYZANTINE SACRED ART. Constantine Cavarnos, ed. and trans. New York: Vantage Press, 1957. Pp. ix + 111; frontispiece; 10 plates. First Edition. \$3.00.

Readers of the *Quarterly* will undoubtedly welcome the recent publication of Constantine Cavarnos' *Byzantine Sacred Art* in which Dr. Cavarnos has compiled, translated from the Greek, and edited selected writings of the contemporary Greek iconographer, Fotis Kontoglous, as well as having written the Preface, the Introduction, and Notes. There are eleven beautiful plates taken by Constantine Cavarnos that greatly enhance the beauty of this handsome book.

This book, though small in size, exhibits an enormous Orthodox religious fervor. It minces no words in presenting the Orthodox point of view about Byzantine art. Through selections from Kontoglous' writings, Dr. Constantine Cavarnos cogently presents the views of Greece's foremost iconographer on Byzantine art and the Byzantine Art Tradition. Comparisons with Western art are constantly made, and it is categorically stated that "... the only true art is Byzantine art." (p. 26) "The most profound kind of painting is religious painting and the most profound kind of religious painting is the Byzantine because it is more spiritual, because it has truer roots — the Gospels." (p. 66)

Many books have been written on Byzantine art from the historical and aesthetic points of view but *Byzantine Sacred Art* is written from the Byzantine *spiritual* point of view. It is a serious attempt to explain the spiritual art of the Byzantine East to all who would but lend a sympathetic ear.

Some will undoubtedly find this book disturbing because it has a definite point of view — a Byzantine Orthodox point of view. But it is precisely because Dr. Constantinos Cavarnos and Fotis Kontoglous have a point of view that they wish to present their point of view to the reading public and clarify the confusion that exists in many people's minds about Byzantine art. This book is not an art manual, nor is it an art history. It is a book that attempts to penetrate into the deeper essence of Byzantine *religious* art where there are richer spiritual rewards for those that are but willing to seek them and prepared to understand them.

— JOHN E. REXIN

ERRATA

APRIL 1957 ISSUE

- Page 20, note to read Arkhive, not Akhiv.
- Page 23, line 15 to read "loved her children" not "loved children".
- Page 24, line 5 from the bottom to read Bernardin, not Bernadin.
- Page 25, line 2 to read "a great charm" not "and charm".
line 7 to read "to our children" not "to children".
- Page 30, line 4 to read persecution, not presecution.

JULY 1957 ISSUE

- Page 43, line 10 should read "Christian vassals remained loyal to him".
- Page 44, bottom line should read "where Ottoman rule was first installed".

OCTOBER 1957 ISSUE

- Page 30, line 11 from the bottom to read "over death" not "of death".
- Page 39, line 1 to read "in te". (Augustine).
- Page 49, line 6, vouldos should have been omitted.
 - line 7, mony should read monk.
 - line 13, th should read the.
 - line 14, beuty should read beauty.
 - line 28, be should read is.
- Page 50, line 8, Kokkinias should read Kokkinakis.
 - line 11, Pp. 46 should read Pp. 64.
 - line 3 from the bottom, congent should read cogent and ecclesiastical should read ecclesiastical.